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YOUR INCOME

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
JANUARY, 1923.

Xmas Carol*

A Symphonic Tone-Poem

By Bernard Gilbert

EDWARD SIMONS. ERASMUS TYRELL. LUTHER EMMANUEL TYRELL. LUCINDA MUNKS. ANNIE ROWETT. JOHN BURROWS. BEEFBONE BAVIN. CYRIL CUTTS. (LONG TOM O' BLY.)

SIMONS. pinched about the gills He's getting old *It's gone the quarter*
ERASMUS. *Good evening Simons. You're very punctual.* He always is though
LUTHER. I doubt that *Good evening Edward* he needn't look so fauce

---

SIMONS. *I heard it up here. Yes.* It's nearly Twelve as a matter of fact
ERASMUS. and I must *I didn't hear it. Did you Luther?* Miss Munks isn't
LUTHER. about it *I didn't hear it; we left at the half-hour.* I don't

---

SIMONS. Miss Bennet said I was slow this afternoon she's a spiteful
ERASMUS. here *Where's Miss Munks?* She's always late though Women are
LUTHER. care *Edward is always first Dad. She said she'd be here at*

SIMONS. bitch *I hope she won't forget. We must have the treble.* Oh I do
ERASMUS. though *She'll be here all right enough.* I wish Luther would
LUTHER. *the time.* You needn't get in a sweat Lucinda won't miss the

---

SIMONS. hope she won't for I feel in form to-night *It's not cold is it?*
ERASMUS. take to her she's just the one for him *Wait a bit my boy;*
LUTHER. chance *We can't start without her I suppose?* I could sing

* Being a movement from Volume 7 of the "Old England" Series.

SIMONS. What fun we used to have at Rilby *We must wait.* me and Jim

ERASMUS. *it's only just gone time. I feel the cold more than I used to.*

LUTHER. treble better'n her but dear Edward would sulk without his

---

SIMONS. Bastow and Franky Dobson the drinks we got I'm glad the Bapt-

ERASMUS. I'm getting old Hendrick Edwards is five years older and as

LUTHER. beloved I shall be sleepy to-morrow but it's Christmas Dash those

---

SIMONS. -ists aren't teetotalers a drop keeps the cold out Where is she

ERASMUS. hard as nails So is Isaac Creasey When he goes I'm afraid

LUTHER. long services what a bore I promised Mr. Dean to look in on

---

SIMONS. *It's nearly twelve!* She's bound to come When she was playing

ERASMUS. there'll be trouble at Fletton *Hardly yet!* but the Lord always

LUTHER. Saturday to see if everything was *It must be nearly; Dad!* now

---

SIMONS. the harmonium on Sunday—*It's a band!* she —*Always out of tune!*

ERASMUS. raises some—what—*What's that?* it sounds like *So it is!*

LUTHER. I'm sure What the deuce is that *It's the Salvationists!* This is

---

SIMONS. confound 'em I wish she'd be quick we'd drown that beastly *Do*

ERASMUS. *Poor misguided creatures* though they fight the Catholics with

LUTHER. rather a lark at night conspirators serenaders romance I'm

---

SIMONS. *you remember Mr. Fennington offering 'em elderberry wine and*

ERASMUS. the poorer classes God moves in a mysterious way his wonders

LUTHER. sorry Aaron Tharp isn't here He'd like it *Ha ha ha ha ha ha*

SIMONS. *they all got drunk* P'raps if we called at Mr. Fennington's he'd

ERASMUS. *Oh don't laugh Luther. It's not a thing to laugh at. You should*

LUTHER. *They burst the drum and I never*—well I'm dashed what next

---

SIMONS. give us some *It was a bit comic though Mr. Tyrell. You couldn't*

ERASMUS. *abstain. Drunkenness is a terrible thing. We should pray to be*

LUTHER. *I can't help it Dad. A thing can be funny even if it's bad and*

SIMONS. *help it. Soon be another Christmas won't it!* I hope by next year

ERASMUS. *delivered from temptation.* Oh my son my son *Yes. Another year*

LUTHER. oh damn it all why aren't I somewhere else I won't be here next

---

SIMONS. I shall be married and p'raps by then we shall have a family

ERASMUS. *almost gone. Another step towards eternity. It makes one realise*

LUTHER. Christmas come what may I want to live live live live The world

---

SIMONS. Oh why doesn't Lucinda come She can't say she forgot the time

ERASMUS. *the awfulness of life.* Oh my dear dear son if your eyes could

LUTHER. is so wide That band's stopped now It wasn't half bad really in

---

SIMONS. *Mr. Burrows does know we're coming doesn't he?* what about that

ERASMUS. be opened Mrs. Tyler told me she'd prayed fifty years for her

LUTHER. the darkness If I can only get a job in Barkston and then London

---

SIMONS. gal Fancy her thinking no one knew her as if *It's a rum thing*

ERASMUS. two sons *Oh yes he knows! I told him.* I wish he would persuade

LUTHER. *You told him Dad didn't you?* Of course if I enlisted that would

---

SIMONS. *about that gal of his ain't it. Everybody knows who she is.* Where

ERASMUS. that girl to come to Service and then who knows if *I think they*

LUTHER. settle it and what about getting a war job in London *Of course*

SIMONS. can Lucinda be Why don't she come We shall have to start with-

ERASMUS. *must. Poor thing. Someone ought to tell her father about her.*

LUTHER. *they do!* Fancy her thinking they wouldn't silly girl They say

SIMONS. *-out her Miss Munks does know we're meeting here?* when we're

ERASMUS. *Poor lost lamb!* but when I reasoned with Edwards about his

LUTHER. she lived with a sergeant in London and he deserted her I

SIMONS. married I'll see she's up to time Women must be ruled *Is that*

ERASMUS. son *Yes!* he wouldn't budge Oh my dear son if only you could be

LUTHER. *Of course she does.* wonder if John Burrows has tried They're

---

SIMONS. *her?* I believe it is No Yes No It's some tramp Drat her I do

ERASMUS. brought to grace my heart would *Miss Munks is going to be*

LUTHER. alone but he's too scared Nobody suggests it yet he's every

---

SIMONS. be afraid she's not coming and *There she is!* thank goodness

ERASMUS. *late. P'raps after all we shall have to make—at last!* she

LUTHER. chance to be in her bed all night *Here she comes! About time*

SIMONS. how nice she looks in that coat Perhaps I shall be able to

ERASMUS. ought to try and be in time But we can start now *She's a*

LUTHER. *too!* What a fright in that hat where did she find it I think

---

SIMONS. hold her hand Why don't she speak to me *Good evening Miss Munks*

ERASMUS. *great help.* I don't know what we should do without her and *Good*

LUTHER. she's the ugliest woman in Bly and that's saying a good deal

---

LUCINDA MUNKS. *Good evening Mr. Tyrell; Good evening Luther . . .*

SIMONS. What's the matter with her anyway Oh she did smile then That's

ERASMUS. *evening Miss Munks. I was afraid you had missed the way. Now*

LUTHER. *Good evening Miss Munks! We thought you'd joined up with the*

LUCINDA. and I don't *Good evening Mr. Simons.* If Edward Simons thinks I'm

---

SIMONS. better Now we can start *Yes let's begin. It's getting on!* she

ERASMUS. *we can begin.* We're late enough as it is. *What shall we have?*

LUTHER. *Salvationists! Yes let's begin Dad.* I should say something sharper

LUCINDA. going to speak first he's mistaken He's not the only pebble

---

SIMONS. *Let's have "Hark the Herald Angels" shall we?* I can always get

ERASMUS. *Don't make fun Luther.* We must remember to call at the Tylers

LUTHER. in his place if I were *No no let's have "Christians Awake." That*

LUCINDA. though he's a handsome old thing with that moustache and I don't

---

SIMONS. away with that and if we *We always start with "Hark the Herald"*

ERASMUS. *Just as you like.* I hope they won't start squabbling like last

LUTHER. *always begins well. We're sick of "Herald Angels" the Church*

LUCINDA. know that I shouldn't be better off *I think Mr. Tyrell we ought*

SIMONS. *It's the proper way to begin your carols. You couldn't do any-*

ERASMUS. year *Well don't let's dispute about it. We'd better let Miss*

LUTHER. *and the Salvationists and all the ragtag have that. We don't*

LUCINDA. *to begin with "While Shepherds Watched." That's our own tune*

SIMONS. *how else. I don't care what you say. I'm the leader of the*

ERASMUS. *Munks have the choice. Be quiet Luther! Just a moment Simons!*

LUTHER. *want to be mixed up with that lot.—Well Dad all the same we*

LUCINDA. *isn't it and whoever heard of beginning with either "Christians*

SIMONS. *choir and ought to have the say in what's sung and chance the*

ERASMUS. *Now Miss Munks will you please—Oh really! Please all listen a*

LUTHER. *aren't slaves and "Christians Awake" is the best starter you can*

LUCINDA. *Awake" or "Herald Angels." As Mrs. Tyler says we ought to stick*

SIMONS. *ducks. I do think the leader of the choir ought to be listened*

ERASMUS. *moment. Folks will think we're intoxicated. Luther! Luther!*

LUTHER. *have for carols and I don't care who says otherwise nor— well*

LUCINDA. *to the old ways. If it comes to that don't I play the harmonium*

SIMONS. *to. Oh well have it as you like then. Anything will do only*

ERASMUS. *Simons! Miss Munks! If you please all of you. Now Miss Munks if*

LUTHER. *Dad why pick on me? I've as much voice as the others. Oh well*

LUCINDA. *and haven't I as much right to a voice as anyone else and more*

SIMONS. *let's begin or we shall be here all night. I— Oh!*
ERASMUS. *you will say what you think is the best we— Ah!*
LUTHER. *have it as you like. Anything only do for— Ho!*
LUCINDA. *if it comes to that. Yes Mr. Tyrell I'm agree— Ooh!*

SIMONS. *What's that? What's that? Was it a—no it's one of ours! It's all*

ERASMUS. *It's all right. It's one of our own aeroplanes. It's all right!*

LUTHER. *A Zepp. coming? No only ours practising. That's a Very light*

LUCINDA. *Ooooooooooohhhhhhh is it—what is it? A bomb? Let's get under*

SIMONS. *right Miss Munks. It's quite all right. One of our machines.*

ERASMUS. *Now let us compose ourselves and sing under the shadow of the*

LUTHER. *There she goes! Look how it lights everything up. They're doing*

LUCINDA. *shelter. I don't like it. Oh, all right. But let's sing something*

SIMONS. She caught hold of my arm Dare I hold her Yes Why not and I'll

ERASMUS. *Almighty's arm.* Oh Jehovah bless this warning to our hearts

LUTHER. *it for practice: else you'd hear the buzzer from the wagon works.*

LUCINDA. *Quick.* Oh dear I grabbed his arm Did he notice He's so solid

---

SIMONS. whisper *I'll take care of you.* she doesn't mind She likes it

ERASMUS. Look down on these thy children and grant us *We will now*

LUTHER. That's rather poetic of the old man It's almost moving isn't it

LUCINDA. to hold on to Oh well now that's nice of him I'll whisper too

---

SIMONS. How happy I feel We will sing what she likes I feel as strong

ERASMUS. *sing "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks." That's most approp-*

LUTHER. Look at her snuggling up to Edward Isn't she the limit Old enou-

LUCINDA. *I don't mind if you're here Mr. Simons!* Will he think me forward

---

SIMONS. as ten *Let's start.* I'll shew 'em *I'd better give the notes?*

ERASMUS. *-riate now I think.* It's getting colder every minute and I wish

LUTHER. -gh to be his aunt but anybody that would squeeze her hand

LUCINDA. If I fainted he would hold me in his arms and never never let

---

SIMONS. *Oh no; Miss Munks is treble. She'd best. Will you Miss Munks?*

ERASMUS. I'd put that warm *Yes please Simons. Oh well—better. Please*

LUTHER. *You can't! you're bass! Yes of course she must! Do let's start*

LUCINDA. me go again I wish he'd do it again It's so comforting *Of course*

SIMONS. When we start I'll touch her hand and if she doesn't draw away

ERASMUS. *will you Miss Munks? Then we can get along. We're late as it is.*

LUTHER. *for goodness sake! We've been arguing for an hour and I'm*

LUCINDA. *I will Mr. Simons. Are you ready?* P'raps if I stand behind Mr.

SIMONS. I'll hold it all the time If I stand behind Mr. Tyrell they

ERASMUS. Always this wrangling Sometimes I envy that Catholic priest

LUTHER. *getting frozen feet.* If those two are going to moon and spoon

LUCINDA. Tyrell he will and they'll never notice *Doh: That's too high!*

SIMONS. won't see *Dohhhhhhh!* I'll shew her how to sing won't I just *Yes*

ERASMUS. the hold he has on his flock *Dohhh* the Evil one has his arts

LUTHER. I'm off *Doh me soh dohhhhh. Come on Dad! Now then—we're ready*

LUCINDA. *Dohhhhh! That's better. Are you all ready? Are you ready? I'll*

SIMONS. *quite ready Miss Munks. Dohhhhh!* If I step behind now I shall

ERASMUS. but the righteous *Just a minute while I blow my nose!* I hope

LUTHER. *Are we all ready? Now then Miss Munks! Oh be quick Dad!* All night

LUCINDA. *begin if you're all ready. Now—Oh!* If I draw back now it will

---

SIMONS. have a chance *Are we ready? Are—Dohhhh . . It's a bit high isn't*

ERASMUS. I'm not catching a cold and I was *Yes! . . .* my voice isn't what

LUTHER. here it's sickening why doesn't he *Yes! . . . that's too high! We*

LUCINDA. be all right *Now for it. Are we ready? . . .* now what's wrong I

SIMONS. *it? What about this? Dohhhhhhhh. I think so. Come on then. Now!*

ERASMUS. it was twenty years ago *That's better. Yes. All ready!* now for

LUTHER. *can't get up to the top if we start here. That's better. Now!*

LUCINDA. don't care if Oh well p'raps so *Dohhhhhhhhh* That's it *Ready? Then—*

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *While shepherds watched their flocks by night*

ANNIE ROWETT (in bed). Oh what's that Oh it's the Waits I thought I was

JOHN BURROWS (in bed). . . . . Hullo What the deuce Oh it's Mr. Tyrell

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *All seated on the ground*

ANNIE. back in Fletton with Blind Johnny and Georgy Bell Oh dear

JOHN. he said they should come It must be Twelve I don't remember

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *The angel of the Lord came down*

ANNIE. isn't it heavenly It's home If I could only be there again I

JOHN. falling asleep I was dreaming I was back in the Old Bank and

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *And Glory shone around.*

ANNIE. wouldn't ever want to leave Oh father don't be hard on me I've

JOHN. everyone glad Why did I wake Dreams torment you when you wake

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *All glory be to God on high*

ANNIE. had a bad time and baby's dead Once I used to think it would
JOHN. up Every night the same How Martha would have enjoyed this

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *And on the earth be peace*

ANNIE. be heaven to get away from home but I'd give all to be there
JOHN. I wish I hadn't waked now All alone If it wasn't for the religion

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *God will henceforth from heaven to man*

ANNIE. to-night to see the old faces and the old friends and the
JOHN. I'd be tempted to put an end to it all What's the good of money

---

SIMONS, ERASMUS, LUTHER, LUCINDA. *Begin and never cease.*

ANNIE. chapel There's no place like home after all You want your own
JOHN. and flowery speeches when you're out of date Those Jews get all

---

SIMONS. *Phoo! That was a bit of all right that was.* She squeezed my
ERASMUS. *My voice hasn't quite gone yet.* I'm not so worn out after all
LUTHER. *The old tune sounds well in the night doesn't it? There's*
LUCINDA. He squeezed my hand. *It was indeed.* I'm sure he's going to say
ANNIE. when you're in trouble and lonely I haven't sung for five years
JOHN. Oh Martha why aren't you here I must give up chapel-going now

---

SIMONS. hand She did I shall ask her on Sunday The better the day the
ERASMUS. Hendrick Edwards hasn't a note in *Something in them indeed!*
LUTHER. *something in those old tunes yet.* What a night it is with
LUCINDA. something *It was lovely! Don't our voices go well together!*
ANNIE. nor heard a hymn Only our folks can sing like that Why I'm
JOHN. It's no good I couldn't sing now though once I was as good as

---

SIMONS. deed *What are we going to have next? Let's have something cheery*
ERASMUS. *There's everything in them.* This is a house of sadness Poor John
LUTHER. the stars and music It's romantic "On such a night"—how does

LUCINDA. *There's nothing like the old ones. What are we having next? What*

ANNIE. crying Now fancy that What a good thing no one guesses who I am

JOHN. the best but not now Mr. Gorman was very nice when I left the

---

SIMONS. *to warm our blood.* What a sweet voice she has *Oh let's give 'em*

ERASMUS. Burrows and that girl *There is sadness in the air. Let us sing*

LUTHER. it go Don't remember *Yes what's the next item?* Gracious me the

LUCINDA. *do you say Mr. Simons? What about "Hark the Herald"? We can*

ANNIE. so long as I keep indoors on market days they won't find out but

JOHN. Bank but I'm old and worn out that's the fact and all alone and

---

SIMONS. *a rouser! What about "Christians Awake" Miss Munks?* I don't feel

ERASMUS. *something appropriate. What about "Abide with Me"? or "A Few*

LUTHER. old man's getting maudlin I wonder what on earth *You'll make*

LUCINDA. *cheer ourselves or anybody else up with that.* They say that

ANNIE. I do so long to see the old faces again I've written to Ethel

JOHN. what's the good of living when you've nothing to live for I

SIMONS. *sad not a bit Who wants to weep? Let's have Tallis Canon, then.*

ERASMUS. *More Years shall Roll"?* Poor John must miss his dear wife I

LUTHER. *Burrows cry Dad.* Look at that couple making up to each *Yes!*

LUCINDA. *I don't know Mr. Simons. Anything you like. We could —yes why not.*

ANNIE. this evening to talk father round Whyever am I sobbing like

JOHN. can't bear it That hymn finished me off I couldn't sing now if

---

SIMONS. *That's the tune for us.* I could push a house down and I don't

ERASMUS. fancy *Perhaps you're right Simons. We may fortify the unhappy*

LUTHER. *That's O.K. Certainly!* The last time I sung that was at Worlby

LUCINDA. *It's a lovely hymn* I wonder if Luther saw me but he's too

ANNIE. this I'm too silly but it reminds me so of being at home and

JOHN. anybody paid me What a queer thing life is All at once every-

SIMONS. care if anybody did see us *Come on: let's have the note Miss*
ERASMUS. *with it. There's a power in music to soothe and many a time—*
LUTHER. *Let's set about it then. Who begins? We must be in order for*
LUCINDA. *Dreamy* Oh I feel so happy and I don't *I must start, then you,*
ANNIE. when I heard of that accident to-day I wanted to rush down
JOHN. thing goes from you and nothing's worth while any more and

---

SIMONS. *Munks. Yes the right order please. Good old Tallis! When you're*
ERASMUS. *Yes let's have the proper turns for this. That's right Miss Munks*
LUTHER. *this.* Fancy our turning the Canon into a round. Poor old Tallis
LUCINDA. *then Mr. Tyrell, then Mr. Simons. We'd better sing the two verses*
ANNIE. and talk to everybody but I mustn't till I hear what Ethel says
JOHN. you don't care what happens or what becomes of you If only my

---

SIMONS. *finishing the second verse Miss Munks will you wave your umb-*
ERASMUS. *Now Luther!* Mr. Dean said if he persevered they'd promote him
LUTHER. would turn in his grave if he knew *It's a pity there aren't eight*
LUCINDA. *straight through hadn't we. Oh! My!* I've lost a hair-pin. Never mind
ANNIE. after she's talked to father p'raps he'll come round and call
JOHN. dear old Martha had lived They say that Jew's hated by all at

---

SIMONS. *brella and slow us up? That's twelve going! Give us the note.*
ERASMUS. to be assistant-cashier. *It's twelve o'clock! Another Christmas! Let*
LUTHER. *of us to make a full round! There she strikes! Christmas day! Come*
LUCINDA. There's that man and boy again watching us but I'm not afraid
ANNIE. to see me here It's a good thing I've altered so and no one knows
JOHN. the Bank Fancy smashing Young Edgerley like that when he
CYRIL CUTTS (at the corner). It's getting cold *Mr. Bavin what are we*
BEEFBONE BAVIN (at the corner). *Damn my eyes if that old tune don't*
PARISH CHURCH CLOCK. *The first quarter. . . . The second quarter.*

SIMONS. *Miss Munks. That's it. Are we ready? I'm ready. Come along now.—*

ERASMUS. *us sing to the glory—yes I'm ready—dohhhhhhh—right away now—*

LUTHER. *along Dad. Wake up and get your note. We're in tune with Long*

LUCINDA. *Dohhh.* Isn't that nice we shall be in tune with Long Tom *doh—*

ANNIE. me now P'raps if Ethel still wants to leave home I might take

JOHN. only wanted nursing a bit and would have turned the corner all

CYRIL. *waiting for? I'm getting starved. We sung better'n that at*

BAVIN. *remind me of being a boy like you. What are they doing now?*

THE CLOCK. *Third quarter. . . . Fourth quarter. . . .*

LUCINDA. *Glory to thee, my God this night, for all the bless,*

LUTHER. *Tom.* what luck *Glory to thee, my God this night,*

ERASMUS. There's someone at the corner there *Glory to thee,*

SIMONS. That's it Beautiful Beautiful Heavenly one two three four

ANNIE. It's Christmas Day Oh dear Hark to that Oh I can't bear it any

CYRIL. *Hordle Mr Bavin. Father has the best tenor voice anywhere*

JOHN. right if Listen to that now Wonderful old tune that and

BAVIN. *They're—oh that's it is it! How it takes me back! You shut*

LONG TOM O' BLY. *Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom! Boom!*

LUCINDA. *ings of the light, keep me oh keep, me king of kings,*

LUTHER. *For all the bless, ings of the light, keep me oh keep,*

ERASMUS. *my God this night, for all the bless, ings of the light,*

SIMONS. *Glory to thee, my God this night, for all the bless,*

ANNIE. more I can't sing oh . . *Glory to thee, my God this night,*

CYRIL. *round. I used to sing that every time . . . Glory to thee,*

JOHN. I could have once Oh Martha where are you I can't sing now—

BAVIN. *up about your dad, and sing. Sing damn your eyes! That's it!*

LONG TOM. . . *Boom!* . . *Boom!* . . *Boom!* . . *Boom!*

LUCINDA. *Beneath thine own, almighty wings. Glory to thee,*

LUTHER. *me king of kings, beneath thine own, almighty wings,*

ERASMUS. *Keep me oh keep, me king of kings, beneath thine own,*

SIMONS. *ings of the light, keep me oh keep, me king of kings,*

ANNIE. *For all the bless, ings of the light, keep me oh keep,*

CYRIL. *my God this night, for all the bless, ings of the light,*

JOHN. *Glory to thee, my God this night, for all the bless,*

BAVIN. *Let her rip boy. Now! Glory to thee, my God this night,*

LONG TOM. . . . *Boom!* . . . *Boom!* . . . *Boom!*

The Man Who Could Not Die

By Maxim Gorki

Translated from the Russian by J. Sutton-Paterson

It was at Dobrudja, at the very mouth of the Danube, that old Isergil told me the story that I am going to set down here.

One evening, when the grape harvesting was over and finished for the day, the Moldavians employed in the vineyard went down to the seashore, but I, probably from sheer laziness, stayed with old Isergil. We lay on the ground under the heavy shade of the vines and watched the gradually disappearing outlines of the workers as they seemed more and more to melt into the gathering darkness.

They were laughing and singing as they strolled along: the men—sunburnt and sturdy, with long black moustaches and shocks of thick hair that hung over their shoulders, nearly all of them dressed in short velvet jackets and enormously wide trousers; the women and girls—gay, pretty, and supple as willow branches, with dark blue eyes and hair fastened with garlands of gilded coins that played over their shoulders in the evening breeze.

The bells tinkled softly as the wind swept over the wide openness of the Steppes. Now and then, when a sudden gust swept through the darkness as though in combat with some invisible antagonist, their hair was blown high above their heads and into strangely fantastic shapes. Seen from a distance, these bizarre outlines gave to the women a strangely fairy-like appearance. Further they went, and still further, until the darkness, with all its magic, threw about them a mantle that seemed more and more fantastic.

Now arose the voice of a violin. A girl's voice rang in a velvety alto through the night, and indistinctly the sound of laughter came to our ears. At this time the imagination, having burst the bounds of reality in the bewitching half-light of the dying day, wove all these sounds into garlands of gaily coloured ribbons and flowers of subtle melody,

which hovered gracefully over the dim outlines of the toilers. The evening air was becoming permeated with the sharp, salty tang of the sea, mingled with the warm, rain-soaked odour of the earth. A few clouds that appeared to have been torn away from the recent rain-storm still lingered in the air, twisting softly and delicately tinting the western sky. Now white and feathery, now grey and sinister, now towering like enormous cliffs, fiery, roseate, and brilliantly red, now black and terribly threatening. And through all these clouds one occasionally caught glimpses of the sky itself, darkly blue and strangely sinister, yet already lit and illumined by myriads of tiny stars that peeped tenderly over the whole of the unending Steppes. All this—the perfume, the clouds, the stars, and the people—glittered with bewitching beauty in the fragrant golden twilight; and yet an atmosphere of terrible and lasting sadness hovered over everything, as at the beginning of a fairy tale or at the end of some love affair. Everything was alive, harmoniously and beautifully alive, and yet the hand of death seemed to be over all, as though by some occult power their luxuriant growth had been suddenly arrested. In some strange way this life lacked the nervous action of real life. It lacked those sounds that have the power of latent growth. The sounds that came to our ears at this moment, however, were faint and broken, and as they slowly died away they seemed to be transformed into soft sighs—sighs of regret for something past, or sighs of longing for something yet to come.

Longing for what? Happiness, perhaps—that elusive unrecognisable will o' the wisp, human happiness? . . .

As these soft tones floated through the air I was filled with strange longings. I wished that I might suddenly be transformed into dust, that I might be blown by the winds in all directions. I longed equally to flow like a warm stream through the Steppes, eventually to sweep into the sea and then to rise in soft vapour amongst the exquisitely beautiful clouds. I wished that I, and I alone, could permeate that entirely sorrowful and beautiful night. As I thought I became sad and melancholy, without myself knowing why.

"Why haven't you gone with the others?" asked old Isergil as she nodded towards the sea.

She was bent and doubled with old age, doubled until she looked like a half-closed knife. Now her once blue eyes were sad and tearful. Her voice was dry and thin, without the slightest vibration. The voice of a suddenly revived corpse, one might say. Her words seemed to issue from her creaking old bones. Truly it was a miracle that she could speak at all!

"I didn't care to," I replied.

"Well, well, well! Evidently you are born old, you people of the north. You are all stupid and sullen as the very Devil. Why, even our girls are afraid of you, and yet you are certainly young and strong enough."

The moon had risen now. Its orb was large and deeply red. In a way it seemed to have been born out of the womb of the very Steppes which had grown fat and fertile through hundreds of years on the blood of the innumerable human victims it had devoured. The shadows of the vine leaves wove delicate patterns of lacery around us, covering us as with a net whose fragile meshes danced and trembled without end. To the left of us quivered the shadows of the few clouds that remained, bright and transparent in the shifting moonbeams. We could just barely hear the murmur of the sea in the distance, the soft weeping of the violin, the cheerful and light laughter of a young girl mingling with the deeper baritone of her companion—all harmonising with the regular and unending lilt and ripple of the waves against the shore.

"Look! There comes Larra!"

I followed with my eyes the crooked finger of old Isergil, and saw quivering shadows, many shadows—and one of them, darker and thicker, hovered lower and more rapidly than the rest. It was nothing but the shadow of a layer of clouds that moved across the sky faster and lower than the other clouds directly over our heads.

"I see nobody there," I said.

"Why then, you are blinder than I, old woman though I am. Look there—don't you see? That big black shape that flies so quickly over the Steppes."

I looked again, but saw nothing at all but shadows.

"That's nothing but a shadow," I said. "Why do you call it Larra?"

" Because it is Larra. He has turned into a shadow, and surely it's high time he did, too. He has been living for thousands of years now, and the sun has sucked all the blood and marrow from his bones, and the wind has shrivelled up his body until but very few people indeed can recognise him at all. Thus does God punish us human beings for our overwhelming pride."

" Tell me about it," I begged the old Gipsy, already picturing to myself one of those exquisitely subtle fairy tales the like of which one never meets with outside the borders of the Steppes.

And so after a few moments' delay old Isergil began her story.

" It happened many thousands of years ago. Ah yes, many thousands as I well know. Far over the sea towards the rising of the sun lies the land of the Great Stream, and in that land every little tree and every blade of grass gives sufficient shelter for man and insect against the sun that shines there with a most terrible blaze. So generous is the earth in that country, you see.

" Once upon a time there lived in that very land a race of most mighty and terrible men who tended their herds and spent their days in hunting the savage beasts of the plains so that they might eat them at the great feasts that followed all their hunting expeditions. Yes, at the end of every hunting they held a great feast, singing songs and making love to the girls, who were flame-bright in their loveliness in that land.

" Once, in the very midst of a banquet, a great eagle swooped down from the sky and carried off one of their maidens. Dark was her hair and her body tender and fragrant as the night. The hunters shot many arrows after the great bird, but they all fell back to earth. Yes, they looked for the maiden everywhere, but never did they find her. And in time she was forgotten, as all the good and beautiful things of the world are sooner or later forgotten of all men."

The old Gipsy sighed and became silent. Her creaking voice sounded like the wheels of centuries suddenly set astir, astir to wake old memories that had long slumbered like some forgotten letters in a vaguely scented drawer. We waited for a few moments and heard

the sea murmuring its vague and beautiful accompaniment to this old legend that was older and more sacred than the Steppes themselves. So we listened whilst the ocean and land whispered together.

" Twenty years later the maiden returned, shattered and weary, and with her came a youth, strong and handsome as she herself once had been. And when they asked her where she had been all these years she told them that the eagle had taken her to his nest and forced her to become his wife. The youth was his son, but the father was no longer alive. At that moment when he found he had become old and his end was nearing, he raised himself by a final effort high in the evening air towards the sun, and then, folding his wings, allowed himself to fall and be dashed to pieces on the jagged rocks below.

" Everyone looked in amazement at the eagle's son, and they noticed that he was in no way different from all of them except that his eye was proud and defiant as the eye of the old eagle, his father, had been. When they spoke to him he replied or remained silent as it seemed to please him; and when the elders addressed him he answered them calmly as though he was their equal. This displeased them, and they told him that thousands of good and brave people admired and revered them, whilst he, a mere lad, treated them with what almost amounted to scorn. He laughed, and this annoyed them all even more. They called him an unfinished arrow whose barb had been left unsharpened. But all the time he looked at them with his cold and haughty eyes, remarking that if other people were fools enough to obey them he did not intend to do so. It was not his intention to abide by the elders' wishes.

" Hereupon they became terribly enraged and cried out that there was no place for him in their midst! ' Let him go wherever he wishes!' they said. He merely laughed and went wherever he wished—namely, to a beautiful young girl who had been looking at him long and fixedly. He slowly approached her and took her in his arms. This girl, however, was the daughter of one of the elders who had just rebuked him. And although he was handsome she spurned his embrace, for she feared the wrath of her father. She pushed him sharply away from her and was

about to leave, but he followed her; and as she fell down, he placed his foot upon her breast. So fiercely did he crush it that the blood began to spurt from her mouth and nostrils, and the life rushed forth from her quivering heart.

"All those who had witnessed the scene were overcome with horror. Never in all their lives had they seen anyone killed in a manner such as this. For a long time they were silent, gazing at the dead maiden as she lay there with her terrified eyes all distended and her bleeding mouth that even in death seemed to be crying for revenge. And they gazed at him as he stood there alone, cold and defiant, with head raised high, inviting the punishment that he knew was about to fall on his head. Finally recovering their senses they took and bound him, and then left him there, for they thought it too merciful a punishment to put him to death at once for such an unheard of crime as he had just committed."

The darkness of the night was spreading, its meshes still interwoven and intermingled with the soft threads of melody heard in the distance, its tints becoming more and more fantastic. The crickets sang among the trembling vine leaves, the wind sighed and whispered to itself, and the full moon, blood-red hereto, grew gradually more silvery, throwing its fantastic shimmer over the whole of the vast Steppes.

"And they gathered together the next morning to decide what was the just penalty he should pay for his crime. One suggested that he should be torn into four pieces by strong horses all going in opposite directions. This did not quite satisfy them. Another proposed that they one and all should shoot their arrows at him. But this too did not seem to be a sufficiently cruel punishment. Some recommended that he should be burned at the stake, but in that case they imagined the smoke might hide his suffering from their eyes. They discussed this thing and that thing, but came to no good decision, no torture that would at once satisfy them and at the same time fully serve justice. And his mother knelt at their knees weeping, yet found no word to gain mercy for her son. For a long time they deliberated until finally a wise man said 'Let us ask him why he did it.'

"They asked him and he replied, 'First free me of

these chains and then I will perhaps tell you. Unless I am freed I refuse to talk to any man!'

"And when at last they had removed his chains he said: 'Now what do you want?' Yes, that is what he said, and it was in the tone of a master talking to his slaves, not as a prisoner that he spoke.

"'You have already heard what we want to know,' said the wise man.

"'Why should I explain my actions to you?'

"'In order that we may understand you if only a very little, O terrible Eagle! Your life is forfeited at any rate, so had you not better tell us why you killed this young maiden? We are going to live on, and it is necessary that we should learn a little more to add to that which we already know.'

"'Very well then, I will tell you, although I do not quite know myself what has happened. To me it seems that I killed her when she spurned me for trying to embrace her.'

"'But she was not yours!'

"'Do you then only use what is yours? I think that each man brings with him nothing but his speech, his hands and his feet. These alone out of everything are his by right of birth. And yet do not all of you possess wives, beasts of burden, tracts of land, and many other things besides?'

"To this they replied that whatsoever people possess they have legally bought with the strength of their labour, at perhaps the cost of their honour, their lives, and their freedom. But he merely insisted that he himself wished to possess whatever was good, young, and beautiful, and to keep all this without sharing its pleasure with anybody else on earth.

"For a long time they argued with him and eventually realised from his words that at least in his own eyes he appeared to be the first and only creature on God's earth, neither recognising, nor indeed being able to recognise, any rights outside of himself. They shuddered when they saw how by this trend of thought he was condemning himself to a terrible life of loneliness on earth and amongst men. To him there was neither race nor mother, but to a certain morbid extent brave and courageous deeds seemed

to interest him. He had neither herd, home, nor mate, and seemed to feel no great urge towards either! "

In the distance on the seashore arose the light ripple of some girl's laughter, intermingled with the melting tenor of an old gipsy song. He would sing perhaps a verse, and then his companions would join in with him and complete the rhythmical round. Slowly the tender shafts of melody rose and fell in the night air, disappearing and ceasing suddenly, as though someone had caught them in their flight and arrested their melodious growth.

" When the elders saw that they could do nothing else with him, they commenced to deliberate again as to what would be the most fitting and proper punishment. This time they had not long to consider the matter in, for the wise man spoke to them, saying, ' Do not harm a hair of his head. God has set in his hard and obdurate heart the most terrible punishment on earth. A stronger and more brutally cruel thing than any of us could imagine. Never in all his life will he have a friend and all men will despise and hate him. In his heart there is neither love nor pity for anything on earth, and in the end this thing shall utterly consume and overcome him. Let him then go free from us all, and God will certainly punish him more fittingly than any of us could.'

" Thereupon a miracle took place. A very strange and wonderful miracle indeed, for out of the calm sky there suddenly pealed a terrible crash of thunder. Yes, my little friend, the Heavenly powers had confirmed the judgment of the wise man, and all those present immediately saw the wisdom of it. The bystanders all bowed their heads and each man went silently to his home. But he, the Eagle's son, who was ever after called Larra (which means exiled or outcast), laughed loud and boisterously at his judges and went on his way alone, a free man. Lonely and free was he, just as his father had been. Yet his father was not a human being! And so Larra began to live his strangely wonderful life—free as an eagle.

" Often he appeared in the settlement of the race of giants, robbing them of their cattle and beautiful maidens —whatever he desired for his pleasure immediately became his victim. People shot their arrows at him, yet his body could not be pierced, for certainly, my little friend, it was shielded against death by an invisible armour of retribution.

He was quick, rapacious, strong, and terrible. Rarely did anyone come face to face with him. For the most part he was only seen from a distance, and whoever caught sight of him shot as many arrows at him as he had or cared to spare. And so for many long years he roamed alone and companionless amongst the haunts of men . . . yet certainly we mortals cannot endure everlasting joy; we cannot be truly happy in constant and unalloyed pleasure, for such pleasure loses all its value in the end, and then, oh, yes, then we begin to long for pain. . . . And so it once happened that he came close to the people, and when they were about to attack him he remained motionless and made no effort to defend himself. Thereupon all the people understood what he most desired, and they shouted, ' Do not touch him, he wants to die ! '

" And they all restrained themselves, for there was not one amongst them who wished to set him free from his unending misery. Yes, they refrained from hurting him in any way, but merely stood around and mocked at him. Larra, however, trembled at their laughter and looked for something that was hidden in his bosom. Grasping it convulsively, he lifted his arm and rushed at the men with a great stone upraised. One and all avoided his attack and yet no one attempted to strike or kill him. Thereupon he fell to the ground, weeping and weary, and they stood about, gazing at his prostrate form. Seeing this, he snatched up a knife that had fallen to the ground from one of the men during the struggle and plunged it into his cloak near to his heart. The knife snapped off short at the handle and he was in no way harmed, and once again he fell to the ground and beat his head against it in his madness and despair. The earth merely yielded, leaving a hollow where his head had struck it.

" ' He cannot die ! ' joyfully cried those who had watched all this. And one by one they went away, leaving him all alone. When they had all gone he turned over and lay on his back, and this is what he saw : High against the heavens, like tiny black dots, flew two eagles. And he, a human being, lay there upon the ground, helpless and unfriended, and in his human eyes there was such deep longing, such endless, terrible sorrow that they could drown out and submerge all the happiness of the whole

world. And from that day to this he has been seeking for death—always solitary, always in vain. And everywhere you can see him, everywhere, little friend, if only you will look with clever enough eyes. . . . You saw him but a very little while ago. . . . He is nothing but a shadow now, and a shadow he will remain for ever. Now he understands neither the speech nor the actions of men. . . . He no longer knows what it is to live, and the great doors of death will for ever be closed against him. He merely wanders and seeks, seeks and wanders. His life is no life and the hope of death no longer smiles upon him, and no rest or welcome can he find amongst men. Thus has God punished man's overwhelming pride."

Old Isergil sighed and became silent, whilst her poor old head sank slowly upon her breast.

I looked at her. Sleep was overpowering the poor old Gipsy, and I pitied her. The last part of her story had burst forth in a loud, almost threatening tone, and yet through it all her words rang with a timid and slavishly humble undertone.

A song arose again on the darkness of the seashore. A most wonderful song it was! First an alto rang through the night, clear and tremulous, the voice of a young girl singing the motif of some gipsy song, then another girl and yet another, now three men, and so until the whole night throbbed and quivered with the exquisite melody. It was strangely beautiful and beautifully strange. A fugue in the Steppes! Born God knows when among the common folk and sung by the common folk!

The melody was exquisite. Each female voice rang sharp and clearly out of the interweaving shreds of melody. To me it was as if many-coloured rills were falling pell mell over some high precipice, falling, eternally falling, without end or stop of any kind.

I thought of sad old things, of life and love dead and passed beyond our ken. Of brave men that died in battle and even braver women who gave their children into the world to help and comfort us. I thought of all things, and above all I thought of God Himself.

For a long time it continued, and this melody rose higher and higher, until it overwhelmed even the constant murmur of the great and endless sea beyond the singers.

The Death of Hudson

By Violet Hunt

" DEAR ——, Will you come to-morrow to tea to meet the most charming man in the world. Not a party. He is too old and ill, but I know you are gentle. So is he."

The young literary aspirant to whom I addressed this invitation a few months ago knows now why I recommended him to be soothing lest, in his ardour, he wearied or startled the delicate dynamo, fortified by doses of digitalis, that maintained the fine, gracile spirit in its sheath of flesh. I was careful of Huddie, but even I did not realise that Beauty must fade so soon. He was deceptive, in that he was anxious not to give trouble and so proud of his unknown weight of years.

Yes, though I had known him since I was a child I did not know how old he was. I supposed him not more than seventy at most and delicate because of his foreign birth, and hastened to fence off any accidental revelation, for who knows that he did not take an elfish pleasure in our ignorance of his secret?

He would enter the room, empty or full of people, with the wearied grace of a D'Orsay, his small head slightly bowed, as if in deprecation of his tallness. He would bestow his long legs unobtrusively on a small gilt chair, or, if we were alone, on a *causeuse*, reclining where other men would have lolled. I would fondly note the fine line from shoulder to knee, and the steel-like limbs expressed in his well-made clothes, for he cared for his appearance, went to a good tailor, and chose his colours carefully. If I offered him a cushion ten to one he would refuse it; but latterly, of his own motion, he would stretch himself out on the sofa and " put up his feet " like a lady.

In the autumn we used, for greater warmth, to go upstairs to the study and sit together on my great-grandmother's extra large Chesterfield sofa with our backs turned —it was his only sign of misliking—to the Vorticist fireworks, and towards the Long Girl of Albert Rutherston's,

which he liked. He would tell me, in that tenuous, wistful voice, of cats and birds, poets and publishers, nuns and flappers (" maidens " he would call them when they lived in the country). He would declare pettishly that, since it had been announced that he was writing a book on animals, he was overwhelmed with letters from people about their so talented pets. He discussed his forthcoming Collected Edition and the tiresome ways of rival publishers. He was proud of having prevented a beautiful young Catholic nurse in Cornwall from taking the vows, and pleased too that the nuns, because of his charm, I very well suppose, had forgiven him. He spoke very plainly about this girl's aptitude for motherhood. He did not mince words, and once when I asked him to tell me about the nightingale that sings so free in his favourite downland country he related to me slowly, without emphasis or comment, a veritable police-court tale of savage lust and cruelty. Nor did he hesitate to discuss the *pros* and *cons* of a recent case uglier even than the loves and hates of Procne and Philomela, with a directness of expression that seemed to disinfect them.

As the winter drew on and his enforced journey to the Cornish Riviera loomed before him he spoke of death and its imminence timidly, faintly, allusively, as I imagine primitive people and peasants may, fearful lest They who hold the shears may hear . . . take notice, perhaps, that such a one is overdue in the shades? . . . And one afternoon in his own house, the dark of an October day made darker by the shade of dolorous planes, dusty with all the summer's drift of the streets they masked, he sat beside me on the tattered, leather-covered sofa, under the tall bookcase, bowed a little, like some sad soul sitting on the Stygian brink, " waiting for waftage," and held out to me his soft, warm, life-giving hand, so little suggestive of this of which, for once, he spoke freely. That day the King of Shadows was in the wide, cavernous room . . . a new candour had come into being, fostered, perhaps, by some egotistic complaint of my own. He announced defiantly, as he had announced many a time before, that he was engaged in tearing up manuscripts, burning naturalist's notes, commandeering his own letters from friends, " so as to leave not a scrap . . ." His voice rose, he was asserting

his right and will to destroy as he was to be destroyed. One of his scientific friends had put before him a ruthless theory of the non-survival of consciousness after death, which I knew disturbed and convinced him.

Since, so his friend told him, all ideas and associations are recorded on minute filaments of the brain substance, and, since these mortal filaments decay, he could not believe that the register they hold, which is in effect Consciousness, can survive.

He sat with his head upon his hands—the very present Sting of Death was so sharp that no futile, *cliché*-like consolation could modify its poignancy. I despaired even as he did, but I tried——

"Don't talk to me. *I* know. *I* know. You are young. . . " I realised then that he must really be old to talk like that. "I am looking straight at death—down a funnel——that narrows—the end of it closed. And I have nothing to do but die. . . ."

The languid legs crossed and uncrossed. "I cannot, at my age, forget it for a single moment . . . and I don't *want* to!" He said that quite querulously, and then sat up and smiled, as if to beg forgiveness for showing temper with me—and Death. He resumed, in a low, soft voice, changed from the voice of his rage, "I shall not see the grass and the things moving up and down in it. And when *you* talk of being unhappy!——"

I asked him piteously if he was really sure that all was lost when we were dead, and he bade me, gently, read something he had written in his last book which he had sent me but which he saw I had not read—*The Return of the Chiff-Chaff*. All he thought about it was there—it was the nearest he could get to telling me what he felt. I *had* forgotten it. . . . I floundered a little, but he did not notice. He was, for the moment, beyond literary politenesses.

The distress of eld was communicated to me, although I *was* younger. I could not help thinking of an animal trapped, with knowledge of its doom; a child afraid of the oncoming dark, a grown man dreading the night when no man can work. We sat still. The leaves of the plane-trees outside rustled and the pigeons, near their hour of feeding from his hand, cooed sweetly. The handsome

Scotch housekeeper, like a Rossetti, with her wistful, primmed, yet sensuous mouth, came in and cleared away from the round, rickety centre table some of the rusty old keepsake albums and the new gilt volumes that came out of America, and, shoving others on one side, spread a cloth worked in coloured crewels and set a tray on that to nestle uncomfortably among the literary wrack. "Well, come to tea," he said wearily, and we moved to the table. I poured out tea, which, I believe, he would rather have done for himself, and we both ate large buns whose savage currantiness I did not appreciate, but made a note to offer him the like next time he came to me, for tea was his solid and last meal. When we had eaten we went into a sort of pantry next door to get the maize and lay it on the projecting tray on the sill, which he had fashioned to support the food and the unwieldy grey birds. They knew him, but, with me there, they would not come, but sat aloof and looked at us.

I liked to get him out of this gloom, where he stayed, I fancy, out of pride and loyalty to the Voice in the Tree, the lady of the *Green Mansions*, who had lived there with him till hideous illness had forced her from his side six years ago. I had never seen her, but I had heard of her always as a tiny being possessed of a mighty voice, who long before she went had grown sulky and cantankerous; made pettish demands on his time and his patience, and kept his friends away from the house. The Voice was extinguished, and the Romance with it. He once told me in a letter, deprecating my too sentimental view of the relations of man and woman, that he had not married his wife for love but for companionship. And I think this was true—truer than he meant it to be. I have never found, in all my friend's writings, a line that leads me to suppose that he ever entertained that exclusive emotion, that passionate interest, with which modern men may regard modern women—Modern Love, which is, after all, an invention of the Minnesingers, when a knight's devotion was his constant moral wear, like a lady's sleave on his heaume. He spoke of a woman's "passion" to me once, but it was only a spasm of humanitarianism evoked in the beautiful Dorothy Grey by the sight of an act of cruelty to a helpless animal. She noticed an ugly tramp picking a bird

out of a hedge and putting it into his pocket. She rose from her seat. "Give that to me!" she said, and the hedge thief, daunted by her splendid gesture, surrendered his prey; and the lady lay in Huddie's heart for ever.

* * * *

Before I went down to the country this August I gave him my address, saying that if I did not hear from him soon—just a line—I should be anxious, and I am afraid that offended him a little and prevented him from writing. But, aware of his wild susceptibility on the score of being looked after, I did not worry much, as I was coming home soon. On Friday morning I came downstairs, faint with want of sleep, into the large, light library, and glanced at *The Times*, telling my host that I had had a presentiment that, on opening the paper, I should see the announcement of my friend's death; as, of course, I should some day, for he was old, and in very large letters, for he was a great man.

The morning after that I awoke refreshed after sleeping well and opened *The Times* and read of the death of Dame Genevieve Ward and lingered over the details of her history. Only when I had done, the headline of the next column struck me and I saw that a greater than she had gone. He had died while I watched, sleepless, the night before. I looked out of the window on to the placid Kentish scene and made up my mind to look on his face once more and walk after him to the grave, wherever it was that they chose to lay him. Between waiting for trunk calls and return telegrams I mused on those hours spent with him, and especially the last time that one never knows to be the last time or one would never have the heart to part.

We had been lunching at Whiteley's together, "under the dome." He liked a table there—the pearly glass roof that scintillated with flakes of light implied sky and the opposite of his home with its black, smoke-stained ceiling, the tattered wallpaper, and picture frames with all the gilding gone off. He ordered for himself spinach, macaroni, and cheese and coffee, and we talked of Wagner. There was a shadow under the gleaming dome. He was dull and far away. Then he put me into a 'bus. As we crossed the road an access of the protective instinct came over me, which I showed and he lightly resented. I watched him, still nervous, out of the window between the people's

heads as he turned away and walked in the direction of Kilburn. He was upright and agile: only the other day Alice told me that her girls walked with him to the bottom of Sheffield Terrace and he had boarded No. 31 while it was in motion.

I got into London at midnight on Sunday, and, early next morning, I boarded No. 31. (How our little life is rounded with these 'buses!) I got down at Westbourne Park Station, turned a corner, and walked along a row of gaunt and decaying, stuccoed and Victorian houses, standing back, with what they call a garden from a straw and paper bestrewn street. This was where he lived and had died, in the tall house at the corner of another dreadful street bisecting it. "Huddie" was his own landlord: I had been told he owned the whole row, but my impression is that only one house was his, which he had converted into three flats and basement for a housekeeper. For himself he had retained the first floor: his tenants, he told me, were preferably ladies.

I looked in vain for the usual effect of white eyelids cast down, but not until I was quite near did I become aware that all the windows were respectful blanks of "union," dun-coloured like the walls. The door was open. The Scotch housekeeper with the Rossetti face was talking to "Ground-floor," a sad-faced old maid. "I was expecting you," she said. The old lady bundled away. My hands were full of sprigs of Banksia roses, which I had wrenched from the bush at my own door because he had admired it so often, standing on the step waiting to be let in, looking like a traveller from a distance with a coat upon his arm, especially when it was warm weather. I had scratched my hand, I had been in such a hurry to get there before they fastened down the lid of the coffin, so as to look my last on the most beautiful human being my eyes have ever rested upon.

The housekeeper said "No," he was screwed down already, and was to be took by road to-morrow at nine to Broadwater Cemetery, where his wife was buried. There was no need to go up, so we stood and talked on the rough, hairy mat, interrupted by tradesmen, peered at by the disgracious old tenants of his choice, who made a business of crossing and recrossing the dull hall, lit by my flaring

red roses. Behind us, at the top of the kitchen stairs gaping black, little red-cheeked Rossetti children in cleanish pinafores poked their heads up and asked their mother what they should do about this and that. . . .

He had been unwell since Monday, with the indigestion high up. He kept touching his chest, saying he could not sleep because of the oppression. . . . He was sure that if he could only get some sleep he would be all right again, and he determined to eat nothing solid. She got a doctor in, who agreed with him, so he had just Bovril and plenty of weak tea. I thought, and said, that perhaps the doctor meant *made* beef tea and nourishing cocoa. " Yes," said the housekeeper, " I expect the doctor did, but he would not have things made on purpose for him, nor yet a nurse." He was very fond of tea, and used to get up and make it in the little pantry for himself as early as five in the morning when he had not slept, and that was one of the reasons why he would not come and stop with me, as I pressed him to do when he complained that his bones ached so he could not sleep, having confidence in my own soft mattresses. But he said gently: " My dear, I don't want to die in your house! " The image called was like a sudden jab at one's heart, and made me answer brusquely, " I shouldn't mind." Once, when his housekeeper was going away for a holiday, he *did* promise as he saw me to the corner. I shouted from the step of No. 31 to him, standing bareheaded among the paper strewings and detritus of suburban life which banked the gutter: " Now, mind, I expect you! " But I felt he would never come.

The indigestion couldn't be stirred; the oppression continued, and he lay there sleepless, alone. The housekeeper went up as often as she could. He spoke often of Alice and of me, admitting it was a bad job we were both away and couldn't come and talk to him; but he would not have us sent for—" No, no! " in his weak, thread-like voice. On Thursday morning his best friend came to him, but did not dare to fetch a nurse lest he should kill his dear by over-exciting him; but he insisted on bringing a specialist. The specialist's prescription was not to hand till midnight, " and then we had to go for it all the way to Whiteley's! "

At midnight she left him, charging him on no account

to get up, for she would look in herself at five o'clock and make his tea. It was dawn when she saw him again, lying awake but uncomplaining; rather more cheerful. He said that he felt drowsy, and, after he had had his tea, he settled himself confidently to go to sleep. She thought him a bit dazed and queerish, but that was partly because, before she left the room again, he shook hands with her, saying "Good-bye!" instead of "Good-night"; but, as she afterwards reflected, the night was by that time well over, and he might have thought of that. . . .

At eight o'clock she sent the little Rossetti girl up to his room, who returned saying that he was asleep. So she left him a little longer, about half an hour, and then sent the child again, who returned with the same answer, adding that she had touched the gentleman and he did not wake. Then the sweet woman, full of fears, hurried upstairs, and found him lying on his side, mercifully, for then the chance was he would not have had bad dreams. He was quite warm, not long dead. He did not get cold till midday, she said, but he was still warm in the small of his back. And his face was beautiful . . . beautiful. . . . but, a few hours later, so altered that she could not bear to look at it.

I said that I must go up. I knew the lid was screwed down, but I believe I thought I should see him, for the first thing I did was to look at the wide bed, on which the sheet was untidily pulled up, expecting to see the outline of a form beneath it. And I said, "But where is he?" like Mary Magdalene; and she pointed to the coffin, which I had overlooked, drawn up alongside the bed like a sort of annexe. It was of light and smooth yellow wood, glistening with brass clamps and drop-handles. There were some white flowers near the nameplate, and I laid my roses beside them; it seemed to me, now, silly and useless, but I had brought them for that purpose. Then I stood and stared all round that long, ugly room, into which he once had brought me to be shown the Chinese toilet service, so large and unwieldy he only used the soap-dish and toothbrush tray of one, and he had three. The ewers and basins were in the drawing-room, and I was appalled to see him stand, both hands raised, on the tippy back of the sofa in front of the tall bookcase to get them down, for I knew he had a heart. The jugs, with narrow

necks like vases, were heavily embossed with birds and flowers in green and red and yellow. I didn't know what ware, nor did he. He wanted to sell two of the sets, and I said I would like to buy one for ten pounds. He hesitated, saying, " I don't know the value . . . and . . . it might be more than ten pounds. . . ." So the bargain lapsed.

At the foot of the bed was a table covered with green baize, and a writing pad, with a pen laid across it, filled half-way down. Had he got out of bed to write in the night? We wondered. . . . Near the bedfoot was an empty saucer . . . he had been feeding the cat, I suppose. . . .

We stood, the woman who had spoken with him last and I, talking out loud. " How can we? " I said, and, with a despairing gesture, she replied, " It doesn't matter." She was weeping, but, although she spoke of him with regard, it was not the familiar fondness that good, kind masters command in persons of her class. . . . I imagine that her sentimentality was rebutted by his simplicity, his polite aloofness which was the meed of us all. He must have seemed to her " so different from most gentlemen she had done for," and, of course, she had not the intercourse with him through his writings which we had.

She spoke of his wife, quite six years away from this house, and indeed, and indeed, it was time she went! Her nerves were awful. . . . Her ways—well, . . . the Rossetti mouth stiffened. Her legs were so short that she always had to have her feet up on a very high foot-stool. She wore ringlets. She did not like him away, and he never left her unless there was someone chartered to sit with her. I remember his visits to our house in those days, and how, at the stroke of six, Huddie would put down his cup, or whatever he was holding, and bolt back to her. I never dared offer to call; I was told that she would have been rude to me; and now, from this good woman's unconsidered utterances, I realised that that was very likely. He was good to her, but of course it gave him nerves too. . . .

Was he ever in danger of forgetting that this dwarfish exacting creature was, sometime, the songstress who sat in her bower in the tree-tops and charmed the young huntsman's soul out of his body? I do not think so.

There was a dull crimson stain on the side of the covering sheet next the coffin. . . . She saw my eyes fixed on

it, and started talking of ugly things pertaining to the mortal body which betrays us in our hour of helplessness, forcing us to let go our carefully retained elegancies and decencies . . . she was willing to gratify the taste we all share for the *macabre*. But I would not let her do so, for love and remembrance. The dreadful antithesis was less plain to her than me. That this pale Exquisite, whose mortal dross should surely have been transmuted quickly into the pale dews of spirit! . . . that this Incorruptible must first don corruption, and in making his toilette for the grave bleed red blood like a soldier on the battlefield! I thought that I, and how much more he, would have preferred to shield this lapse in some dark, cold cave, or, lying in state on a mountain peak, have the eagles pick his bones as white as those of a harmless sheep on Helvellyn! For such a one to perish in the wrack of a "mouldering lodge" in Kilburn!

It was his own choice; yet from that moment, everywhere, the suggestion of decay! In the passage, where the oilcloth had perished in parti-coloured scabs; in the drawing-room, where, from the blotched and bleared maroon sofas and *bergères*, the leather was peeling off, hanging in pendant flaps like the wattles round the neck of a vulture! Not here—oh, not here! Better a shepherd's hut on a West Country moor or Yarmbury Camp neăr Wylye, failing a peak in the Andes!

Victoria, August 22nd: eleven o'clock.

"Change at Brighton! Front part of the train." There were not more than five or six people walking up and down the platform whom I singled out as interested in this direction: two old men, full of years of dignity, one of the type of the foxy statesman of the Elizabethan age; the other eager yet tired-looking; another the executor who had made the arrangements, carrying a carton of flowers, rallying us all, seeking to cover his grief with an attempt at Mark Tapleyism for which we were perhaps secretly obliged to him. There was a distinguished literary critic and a literary doctor, risen very obviously from a sick bed to follow his lifelong friend on this last lap. Presently Alice touched me on the shoulder, and we, the only two women in the convoy, stayed with each other all the time.

At South Kensington I had missed a train to get out and buy a pocket-handkerchief, though resolved not to " break down." To the same end Alice had brought none at all. The country flashed by us. We changed at Brighton, and went on to Worthing. From the windows of the train, as we crossed the Arun, I saw the reaches of sunburned, shining sand, the tips of the masts of ships, and inlet bays of sea between the scattered *chalets* of Shoreham. There flowed in to us the smell of the sea and of tar, and other such tokens of man's daily occupation, repugnant enough to mourners who are absenting themselves from life awhile that they may accompany a fallen comrade to the shades. At Worthing we had an hour to wait before the carriages that were to take us to the cemetery would draw up outside the station, and we sat down, all of us, at a marble-topped table and fed, like any horse that unconcernedly crops the grass by the side of his dead fellow, but shamefacedly, being human. I think it was what he would have wished. He was too real for sentiment.

The publishers began to discuss the literary reputation of their late client and the proposed Collected Edition of his works. I was glad they had the grace to leave money out of the discussion. The red-cheeked, white-bearded one intimated politely that this reputation had been all owing to a *confrère*, present, who disclaimed the honour and gave it away to a third, absent. To me, for whom the Work was the Life, this conversation was not so out of place. Often we two had discussed this collected edition; the claims, pegged out, of different publishers, were the plague of his life. In the same breath he would say that he wanted no memoirs written, no serving up of notebooks *à la Butler*. . . . There was talk now of a forgotten novel, published in his youth, of which I had never heard him speak. It was not up to the level of *Green Mansions*, but had " very fine passages." Someone said he would not wish it. . . .

The carriage stopped in front of a stone gatehouse through whose archway we got a glimpse of a sunlit, flower-bedight prairie. On the platform of sullen macadam a white-banded, black-gloved clergyman was standing beside the box that was raised on a handcart. Borne by grunting bearers, it followed us into the tiny chapel, where for half an hour we listened to St. Paul's puzzling

announcements delivered in tones that suggested the reader's disclaimer of any possible interpretation. When we came out it appeared to be a question of who was to walk first after the coffin. A short lady in dull, complete black was mentioning, with tearful urgency, her name and status. For six years she had been " with " the wife of the deceased, and desired, I believe, to walk first. . . . Mr. M. R., walking alone and quickly with his bunch of heather, was long ahead of us all. Alice and I passed down the path bordered by headstones. We had invited the insistent lady in black to walk between us, which earned us a sad and backward glance from Mr. M. R., for now she loudly discussed her late patient. She had often seen the husband—oh, yes, he used to come to Worthing and push his wife about along the front in her bathchair. She regretted that he had not been down since the funeral, so he had not seen how the daisies were growing on the double grave. " He had promised to lie beside her. . . . She was always ill, and couldn't even see to read when I came to her. . . . Many a time she said, ' I am so glad I have got a *lady* to look after me ! ' " . . . and so on and so on. Behind us now was the Rossetti housekeeper, quiet, her red mouth pinched with weeping, and her young husband bearing a sheaf of flowers in tissue paper. . . .

The grave was close to an ash tree, whose tough, coarse roots, truncated by the gravedigger's spade, stuck out like a man's six days' beard from the level panels at the side.

The sun shone keen, the wind rustled in the ash-keys. The box was lowered into the hole with bands coloured like the rejected earth heaped half-way up the trunk of the tree. The feet of the men pashed the pink-and-white daisies on the other plot. Well, they would spring again ! The young clergyman read the remainder of the service from his prayer-book, propped before him, using his soft hat as a lectern. Taken so it was not very moving, and no one broke down. He said " earth to earth " so quickly that most of us lost the phrase of phrases. His assistant, however, did not miss his cue, but, picking from the handy heap of soil behind him the necessary grains of earth, threw them. They did not rattle, being clayey, and when he had performed his task he dusted his palms together with a gesture of disgust, as a white-handed amateur gardener might have done.

The woman who had been with the dead man's wife shouted:—

" Now she's happy at last. She's got him to herself! "

* * * *

Afterwards the kind Executor showed me how to look on it *à la Hudson.* " It was her hour, poor thing! " he said. " Her one chance in her dull life of expressing herself—being before the public. *He* wouldn't have stopped her! "

No one else said anything. No one cried but Mr. M. R., who, after throwing his sprigs of heather down, walked away, stumbling over the graves. The vicar departed, and the local reporters pattered about, scrutinising names on the wreaths and asking questions of anyone who would answer. Some of the mourners, informed that the grave of Richard Jefferies was only five minutes' walk, went to look at it. A few of us stood there, hesitating, not quite liking to leave him. . . .

Mourners are apt to make elision of those days before the burying when their beloved has lain prone and alone in a darkened room under a drawn sheet. We think of him as we last saw him, standing erect under a roof that is waterproof, with a fire to keep him warm; or sturdy in the street, holding an umbrella, perhaps, to shield him from the rain; we may have been " sitting with " him to prevent him feeling solitary; but now

> . . . in the coldë grave
> Alone, withouten any company . . .

we leave him. We are ruthless . . . utilitarian . . . we have the heart, because of a certain chemical change, gradual, hardly to be detected at first except by experts, to consign this brother of ours, who has only just left our table, our fireside, to a cold ditch six feet long by three feet wide, to spend his first night alone under the stars or the rain.

In his own words, and capitals, in that little article of faith of which he spoke to me, he has suffered " the Monstrous Betrayal." The Power he " trusted and worshipped has destroyed him." And I must return home, and, reading again, with reverence, *The Return of the Chiff-Chaff*, learn from him the submission he practised and preached.

The Leash-holder (ii)

A Conversation

By John Hancock

But now again, suddenly recalled from the long journey of his memory, he heard the boy's words ring as with the sound of the bell tolling far away. They had a mournful significance. "I believe in the world's work!" The man's voice was tired; this belief the boy expressed meant such utter defeat for him. "You are wearing magnifying glasses!" he said softly. The boy still looked out of the window. The other heard the voice, as low as his own had been, "And you, diminishing glasses." "Yes," replied the man, "that may be so. He who sees To-morrow cannot see to-day, and he who sees to-day cannot see to-morrow. You who are my spiritual son I have endeavoured to teach the Truths of to-morrow. You and I have lived in my garden——" He muttered to himself and continued, "And now you are watching the life in the street."

"I feel strong," replied the boy, "I want to work. You have been my guardian, you have led me along thought-paths of To-morrow, led me—yes—you are a leash-holder, and I am not a believer in your mastership."

There was a pause and then he added, "After all, the work of the world has to be done."

"Yes, that is true," the other answered, "but let it always be said in that way, thought of and conceived in that manner. It has to be done, but not adored and built up, towered, honoured, sacrificed to by the individual. The world's work has to be done, alas! The tendencies of To-day are toward its increase. That is the difference between us. You see the actual work as life. To me it is the crude instrument by which man lives, it is like a tasteless but nutritious food. It is the means to live devoid of anything that makes for growth, or change, or even sweetness and harmony and Sympathy. There is a great desire for power in you and those you represent. It is the

spirit that conquers. How lacking in any spirit of Sympathy are those possessed of Power! The powerful who refrain from using their gift, they alone are sympathetic. Sympathy is the larger love of To-morrow to which man is at last to awake. Through it he begins to change indeed, to change in all ways and to enter upon the true lives where the world's work, its calls, the sacrifices it entails, and the spirit it engenders grow less with the growth of Sympathy. Sympathy is the root which creates eventually the spirit of humility and of simplicity, when the Change is complete.

" You say I have been the leash-holder. Yes, I have given you the truth."

" In the street," said the boy significantly, " there are three churches. I want to value these things for myself."

The man replied, " Go then; it is a long path leading all to the same root. That root is valuable. The Churches? My son, you wish to value the valueless."

The man's voice was bitter. " It is from the root that you, too, will have to set out after all. I have come to think that one world religion would be better and signify more than all those churches and their quarrelsome hair-splitting. . . .

" Man, the average man, doing the same world's work of which you speak until he is like a haymaker who builds his rick and covers it with his own straw, is indifferent to religion. But there is a desire in the most placid that must be satisfied. Man is a gullible creature to be tempted, bribed almost, with faith by the True. He then suddenly realises that through his bondage to it he has actually come to believe. The slave finds in the end, when he cannot see any taskmaster, that his slavery is really freedom. Such is the nature of man. We are all slaves. Bondage to a system is the inevitable state for every individual, and his bondage is his salvation. It is which system he chooses to serve under that is all-important. For the average man this ' covered in his own straw ' tradition is a taskmaster he can always serve, provided it is a rigorous tradition, whether of religious morality or government. He has highly developed the Pattern instinct, the desire to live decorously, in harmonious, equable placidity rather in the aloof, untroubled, decorative sense of figures in a freize. This pattern instinct the Church fosters. It is

an added mosaic in a carefully chequered life. Should any awake, there is always an open door through which they can see the sky, some gleam of superficial ritual, some superstition. So in all ways it is sound. One develops the thoughts about ugliness, because one realises that just as life is religion, so religion is life; the conduct of one's adoration is as much the conduct of one's morals."

"Then you suggest that people should bow beneath the yoke of an all-knowing Church? Does not that make for Superstition?" asked the boy.

"Is it not possible, nay probable, certain," replied the other, "that a certain amount of superstition among a people may be an element in the composition of a national faith? In the individual superstition may be bred of imagination. The child is beset with a thousand haunting fears; the day and night are fraught with secret rites and perils that no one else has thought of. Every dark alley has its spectre, its ghost, and by the sequence in which a certain thought creates a certain impression, every sunlit glade has its faun, every pine-treed hill its dwarf.

"All this fear in youth, which later grows into a sense of secret beauty in things, is the result of imagination. So, too, will superstition create imagination, imagination which is the helpmate of Faith. Through its helping service, the attendance and attentions it pays to every fantasy of the spirit, and every subtlety of spirit, see how a lasting and enduring Faith is engendered, built upon a sweet solid foundation of all earthly form, clothed in the light of a rarer vision, the imaginative sight growing out of it as surely as from the seed unfolds the perfect flower. And so, as the seed of Imagination may carry in its branching to the perfect Faith something of Superstition, it may well be an influence before the eyes of the slaves, to whom and for whom a religion for their acceptance is fully grown at their birth, binding their lives into a solid state indeed, decorative, quietly beautiful and peaceful, wherein they may take a moral and spiritual past and arrive at last at that masterhood, that sense of individuality which is the throwing off, the sloughing of all accepted conditions of world religion, world morality, world state, or any power except the Self to hold the leash. So it is that through this very world-religion all men 'come through' at last, like the

blind dead suddenly rising from the grave to light of day, to the truths of Selfhood and the journey of the Way. They come to cast off the slavery, to have the courage at last to hold themselves in check, to be their own leash-holders."

"There! That is it. It *is* a question of leash-holding. I believe that now. This must be in my life one of the influential experiences of which you speak. It is a great event for me, one of those great events which disclose the unity there is among men."

"No, I do not think so," said the man. "There is unity in the nature of the journey of the Way. But these great events, with the significance of their experience for each individual, but tend yet further to lighten up and to obviate all there is between your way and mine. Each man is to himself a leash-holder. I see he may leash nothing but himself. Alas! what happiness or what freedom from desire can there be for him in life? What is to fill his need if, as it seems, such failure results from any holding of the leash? There must be some love desire, some communion with all created things. It would seem almost that from his limbs shall burst glorious ecstatic flower-excellences, blooming in such marvellous earth, at which he shall riot in song to see. It would seem that he must become nature itself, so diffuse is he, so bodiless, or rather so widespread the areas of his physical growth. Therein how great dwells the ever-growing Soul! From that diviner Father and Motherhood what harmonies shall it not record! How widely shall it come to see and feel and know, gathering together all that is exquisite from a world of joyous little animal life! And how will all these sensations, this sensitiveness, and these sympathies be but a shadow enwrapping the further great and precious search, when he pushes further on toward the ever-increasing wonder, the vision of God his Father, upon whose limbs he blooms as the flowers upon his.

"Even the leash-holding is sad for him who attempts it, in spite of the knowledge he has of To-morrow. The child-lover is a dream. He denies the reality, refusing to believe in the old truth that the child is father of the man. All that he hates in man lies gradually awakening in the child. It is not the child so much as youth that he loves.

" It is youth that appeals to what we might almost call the mother-instinct in him, for there is in some, those fortunate and sympathetic few who, in spite of all manner of strange adventures and contacts with life, keep their childhood's sympathy with them, the sensitive, the sympathetics, in fact, who are open to all winds of emotion from wheresoever they may blow, there is in them this real desireful love, either an echo of a past closer relationship between father and mother, or a foreshadowing of the divine state of the future of which these very sympathetics are the prophetic symbols. So they yearn after youth in the world. It is the lush grass their eyes turn to, ungainly, long-legged calves; it is adolescence that holds for them the perfect beauty. And through all this may it not eventually come about that the state adolescent, the half-state, may be the longest period, the most productive, the freest from the settling down of age with its placid giving-in of principles before the fatigue of fight, the period most joyous in life when man shall experience nature around him and take his place there among his brothers, and feel the joy of life, the glory of an existence through which the bodily life of man shall attain to its perfect growth?

" The change in the physical nature of man is this adolescence which he as a Sympathetic has come to love, just as the mental change is a manhood's prime and the spiritual yet a longer arising from the grave, to a freedom from earthly bondages.

" But now I realise I must hold the leash of myself. The only time I slip it is when I set the Selfhood to annihilate the Self, between whom is eternally a blood-feud. I will tell you the strange subtleties of Leash-holding. I desired to become a leash-holder, to bind you into following my path; but now the time has come I see that you have scented another track as being a truth-road, and I realise that no man may hold anything in leash save himself, no matter what his heart may yearn to caress and cherish and lead. The life of the leash-holder is passed in tears, with the desire of possession strong upon him, of the true and legitimate possession of one who knows the nature of Truth, and having prophetic vision of To-morrow, wishes to lead his spiritual son upon the way he has himself journeyed, so that great events (as he may conceive them)

in the world may not blind his eyes or cover him in their straw. His son is to step into the light of To-morrow, casting off his earth encumbrances; free of the great events through the leash-holding of his spiritual father. But this may not be. All lessons of life, its experiences, its portents, thoughts, conceptions, inspirations, manifestations, arts, revelations, visions, all repeat the fundamental principle of the unity of man with himself.

" The oneness of man! A complete whole to himself, a world in which brother, man, father, son are unknown and non-existent. So what holds the Leash-holder?

" With the passing of time, as the plant of life bears its marvellous fruit, as man lifts up his eyes, peers through the gloom of great events and sees the flying feet of God like the horseless chariots of fire disappearing fast upon their Way up through the thinning clouds of events to the home, the shell that encloses him like walls, the egg of Self-unity, the spiritual changes move in a certain relationship (antagonistic almost, element of truth warring with element of truth) with the changes of the body, and so the body, yearning in its growing, desires the holding of another's leash, while the spiritual growth creates in him the understanding that this is but a transient desire of the body, through which man becomes free of the world, through having been indeed of the world, tree with every tree, man with every man, earth with the earth, and mother with every mother. The desire of the Leash-holder is the desire of the mother.

" To him, then, who is aware of these things, struggling in his earthly limitations and imperfections, knowing of the spiritual beauty of the soul and his prophetic vision of To-morrow, there is a tearing asunder of all possible unity in his life. He is plunged in chaos where nothing is reliable. Here is an echo of his youth. Just as, then, all the great events of his life cast him upon perpetual desert islands where he has to find means of sustenance, there is nothing to which he can cling; everything is change, ever changing, growth ever growing, emancipation from humanity ever emancipating towards the Selfhood with its tight-holding Self, a bondage upon the isolated way. So the Leash-holder who is awake to this To-morrow must not in any way fulfil himself.

"All revealed prophetic visions warp the man of To-day, who, awake to their import and the vistas they disclose of To-morrow, endeavours to act as their wisdom dictates. It is these acts of the higher ideal that are the spiritual failures through which endeavour is crowned by success. The warping, the suppressing of power, as knowledge of prophetic truth really is, is the key to yet further revelations. For single prophecy opens the eyes of perception to a spiritual kingdom which also has its future, its changes, and its divine Truths.

"The nature of the true leash-holder is utterly warped, stunned, torn asunder and scattered abroad. He who absorbingly desired to dwell in the love of another finds that he comes to love lavishly the world and ceases to know single love. Love is a precious water which no well in a desert can ever replenish. When one, perhaps a spiritual son, drinks, there, behold! a miracle keeps it perpetually renewed. That is a promise for the Sympathetic of To-morrow.

"But all this warping, this failure—ah! *there* is the joyous word in spite of all, the echo of freedom's song. All this life of the Leash-holder completes what has been written in deathless words—'Through our failures it is that we succeed'—and truly the written word there of a leash-holder, a Sympathetic, one possessed of prophetic vision of To-morrow, has a deathly and yet external life-giving import for To-day. It tolls the death of To-day, and sings also its Resurrection—as To-morrow."

When the man ceased speaking there was silence. Tears had gathered in the eyes of the boy as he listened; as they fell now he murmured:

"You are wearing magnifying glasses."

He turned to the door. The Leash-holder started, remembering how their conversation had begun and what the boy had then said. Almost in the manner of one who feels there is a fatality in the words, as the door closed on the boy he said, loudly and clearly:

"And you—diminishing glasses."

Five Model Men

By Horus

(4) Captains of Industry

It is a curious fact that what is called the " labour war " is specifically confined to industry. Only the other day we saw the great industrial regions voting for Labour, while the land returned Conservatives, though the economic pressure is quite as acute in rural districts, and the land may truly be regarded as England's particular problem. For two years now farmers have hardly made any money; the wages of land workers have been reduced almost to the subsistence minimum, and in many areas below it, and yet there is no " class war," as there is in industry, and no theory of war; between employer and employed, whether the former be a small farmer, a landed proprietor, or a war plutocrat, the relations are in the true sense of the word democratic.

It is worth while stressing this point, because it is the essential difference between England and France. France has had her land revolution—we seem to be faced with ours. We stepped overnight, as it were, from feudalism into industrialism, but instead of the feudal noblemen directing the new energies, new men arose—the self-made, hard, ruthless, cold manufacturing type out for results. Unfortunately, our great families looked on. They took no part in the industrial evolution; rather they viewed it with contempt, their Public Schools ignored the industrial side of life completely. No sort of attempt was ever made to impart a technical or vocational education other than for the Army, and till quite recently to be an industrialist was not to be a " gentleman," and to be the gentleman of our class schools was to be sublimely ignorant of any knowledge save the classics and a little mathematics. In this peculiarly insular division of classes the new class developed " on its own." These men had iron heads and

iron hearts. They squeezed the last ounce out of their employees; they had no consideration for their general welfare. We have only to read Kingsley, Hood, Ruskin, William Morris, Carlyle, Dickens, etc., to estimate the conditions then ruling. And these manufacturers lived their own lives as between the proletariat and the governing class. They took practically no part in public life. So extraordinary was the gulf dividing them from the "gentry" that almost up to the war a Public School boy hardly liked to admit that his father was an engineer, a financier, a merchant, a broker, a musician or an artist, while to be a tradesman, a shopkeeper, or a company promoter was to be that unpardonable thing—an outsider.

We have changed mightily since the war (Ye gods!); yet so it was, and so in a real sense it still is, certainly as regards education. The industrial workers were shamefully housed, underpaid, and neglected. Employers grew into an irresponsible estate outside, as it were, the community, while the owning class grew up on obsolescent methods of education until war blew down the barriers; and now—well, now the son of the rich shopkeeper, company promoter, tradesman, or financier has taken the position of the Duke's son, but without the tradition of responsibility—"Dad can buy any old title he wants any day," and even Eton knows all about it.

But by the side of the manufacturer there stood the old-fashioned merchant, who was undoubtedly a great type. He evolved far more naturally than the industrial captain, following closely the lines of paternal care displayed by the best of our earlier landlords when the Church rode with the best. The merchant was Britain's stay. It was he who laid the foundations of our trade and credit, who exploited the markets of the world, who spread the fame of British goods, who established our unique and unrivalled reputation for honesty so that, at any rate up to the war, an Englishman could get cash for a cheque practically all over the world—on his word. He was the overseas distributor. His motto was: "If you want a thing done well, do it yourself." He was a Puritan, simple in habit, scrupulously exact and fair, not given to publicity. His word was his bond. The old City merchant was the carrier-on of Cromwell's "Ironside" England. His

money was good, his goods were good. To him, trade was a gospel of quality.

The manufacturer or producer was entirely different. His success was built up by individual effort, control of detail, hard work, relentless driving-power, utter lack of sentiment or sympathy, in command of willing and skilful workers whom he sweated. Those men enjoyed amazing advantages in boundless supplies of coal and iron and the good fortune, which was their luck, of producing in a country exceptionally rich in scientific and inventive genius, which thus gave them a long start and for a time a virtual monopoly in the production of many types of merchandise and industry, and in a time when Europe, torn and split by religious and feudal war, was hardly a competitor.

The wealth and strength of Britain was derived from these Empire pioneers. After the Napoleonic wars we had a monopoly of the seas, a monopoly of gold currency, a monopoly of coal and iron, a monopoly of merchandise, a monopoly of credit and trading honesty, above all, a monopoly of *Free Trade*. These were wonderful assets. London became the world's emporium and clearing-house, and its cheque or bill was a world bond. We stood essentially for quality. We were the Romans of the modern world.

And now the throes of a new order confront us. We have lost our monopolies. All Europe has become industrialised. We no longer possess a start over the other peoples; we no longer enjoy a favoured position with regard to supplies of raw material; we are—thanks to our education, still blindly conducted as the playground for the character-building of a class dispossessed by circumstance and the very nature of its education from governing—a very poor second with regard to creation, invention, and the application of science, while on the one hand we face an ever-increasing competition, and, on the other, a serious loss of many of our pre-war markets, this latter due in great part to the Treaties which have turned the exchanges of Europe into a speculators' gamble, and so against us.

During the war the temporary substitution forced upon our customers in Europe owing to lack of supplies from England and America developed permanent substitution.

It also developed abstinence. Almost a whole generation in parts of Europe will be unacquainted with English goods. Our loss of goodwill for our products cannot be remedied by any magician's wand. Manufacturing facilities in our Colonies and in all civilised nations have vastly increased. Keeping in mind that we can only support one-third of our population by selling our goods abroad, and that we have to bear a dead-weight debt of £7,000,000,000, it is obvious that a new orientation is imperative; that new methods are essential; that not only is " team " work indispensable, but team organisation and direction, and that the life *motif* must be efficiency.

At the present time all workers are feeling the effects of " watered " stocks, high taxes, mortgages, stock dividends, extravagant overhead charges, excessive salaries paid to absorb excess profit, and the dire consequences of wild finance and deflation. Securities have become insecure owing to excessive fixed charges and banking finance. In the England of to-day we can descry credit as perhaps the country's immediate problem. Credit has become, through the banks, a financial prerogative, instead of the producer's prerogative. While producers are crippled with overdrafts and taxes, the banks indulge in an orgy of building, and credit for production is " frozen." It has made the struggle between capital and labour a misnomer. Industrialists are no longer " captains "; they are a salarial branch of finance. To assume that mere price-cutting will right things is erroneous, because general price-cutting will increase the ratio of the fixed charges, which it is the root principle of the financial system to maintain intact at all costs. At present our problem is how to get all the idle man-power of the country and all the idle tool-power in full work again, for the life of the nation depends not upon the accumulated wealth of private ownership or on enormous profits made in certain specific industries such as coal and cotton, but on productive capacity, on all-round work and purchasing power, on the proper functioning and distribution of credit.

It is amusing to recall that Thackeray was compelled by opinion to cease publishing Ruskin's Essays in *Cornhill*—so mad and revolutionary did they seem to the generation of the 'sixties. To-day we can pick up Ruskin—

one of the lawgivers—with benefit. He told men that the power of their guinea depended upon another man's want of it. " There is no wealth but life." That is Europe's post-war problem. Can we win to the scientific sociological State? Or is the war between those who work and reap not and the " earth subduers " to continue? It is largely a question of the reorganisation of credit. That should be the task of finance. Industry must revert to the industrialists, and by that is meant to those scientifically and technically equipped to organise and direct industry. In other words, the new control lies in a return to the old control. Industrial engineers and professional organisers must assume authority at the directors' tables, for the profit-takers will no longer be able to control industry as well in conditions where working processes are crippled by the legal procedure of a financial system which no longer acts in its central service—credit—for the whole. That is the ABC of our industrial problem. We return to Ruskin's plea for a true political economy based upon a comprehensive sociology. The new order can only be some coherent synthesis of society, in which credit is pooled for the common good of production, in which industry is run by those scientifically trained and competent, in which tool and brain power conceives and fashions a sociocracy of service and credit utility.

But this fascinating vista leads too far. To return to the model industrialist. What will he be like in his new governing conditions, he who is to-day the feudal lord of his time? Certainly the business man of the future, the ideal captain of industry, will have to be very different from the men of the iron epoch. He must know the science of organisation as the basis of the new co-ordination and co-operation. He must be organiser, co-ordinator and co-operator, fully conscious of his responsibility towards the State. He will not be able to regard himself as a mere profit-taker or dividend manipulator; more and more he will have to justify both his wealth and his activities. A higher moral code will be exacted. The evil of riches is power—the power over man, and that is the key of the whole industrial problem. In its final analysis it comes down to the right of unlimited individual wealth. We see this in the ridiculous authority wielded, for example, by

Stinnes in Germany, who actually dictates, by virtue of the power obtained by company promoting on a falling currency, to Governments, parties, newspapers, and finance. This is not health, it is disease, and it is not even intelligent. Here we have a morbid symptom which turns life, which is the true wealth of man, into a madhouse. A man literally buys up a nation. And yet in the sheer madness of it there is the kernel of, perhaps, the new method, since by the multiplicity of his operations he is in a synthetic sense co-ordinating and co-operating industry, thus for the time serving a general interest. Yet he can only be a temporary phenomenon. He is the flashlight which illuminates the darkness of the post-war chaos.

The future captain of industry will have to stand pre-eminently for quality. Our entire educational system is out of date. If we are to regain our exporting power, invention will have to be encouraged, scientific research promoted, technical education enormously developed, and in our schools efficiency and the qualifications for a commercial career far more emphasised than they are in the haphazard system prevailing.

Boys should be taught that punctuality is an indispensable business qualification; that imagination and the power to act one's thoughts are the vital ingredients of success; that scrupulous fairness is the first quality of leadership; that clear thinking is the rudiment of organisation; that judgment is the kernel of command. Instead of the arrogance, wastefulness, and recklessness only too often inculcated in our schools, boys should be taught to value good manners, sympathy, and logic, to understand that in the future world birth will not be sufficient, nor wealth, nor privilege, and that there will be less and less room for idlers.

Technically, huge changes are imperative. It is monstrous that in our schools there is no " side " which teaches accountancy and the broad principles which govern a balance sheet, the essentials of manufacturing costs, and general principles of commercial law, and that commerce should still be treated as an uneducational subject.

Far more attention should be paid to foreign languages, commercial geography, trade statistics, and modern history, for in the coming technological State man will be judged

by his efficiency, and a country which shuts off education at fourteen to one class and refuses technical education to the paying class can hardly hope to compete with countries who educate their people vocationally, who seek through a constantly improved system of higher education to turn out skilled and happy workmen and a more human relationship. As man is an educable creature, so in education lies the solution of most of our industrial difficulties. The existing system, which leaves the adolescence of the nation educationally unhandled, is stultifying itself beyond repair, and at bottom the whole labour question is psychological far more than economic. This was the minus of Marx's socialism. He omitted the human factor. We are doing likewise. The leaders of industry should look to education as the quarry of reform and profit.

Our great danger is the assumption that all will be well if we can only revert to cheap manual labour—to the system that has led to a C_3 population. Here the new feudal barons will have to come to a decision, for on it will depend the evolution of the class war and our whole industrial and credit position. Owing to the yawning gap educationally between employer and employed, the divergence of interest separating labour from capital is root. The panacea, tranquillity, will not serve. We shall not re-energise labour on another *Song of the Shirt*. We shall not recapture markets by the old methods. We shall not regain our pre-eminence by keeping the people in a low state of education, ill-housed and discontented. And this will be the problem and responsibility of those who direct industry. At stake is the system. In the movement towards the sociological State the captains of industry will either be the communicators, as psychics say, or the destroyers.

This is not the place to attempt any estimate of the evolution of industry, except to say that some radical modification of control and system would seem essential, and on this premise it is safe to predicate a new type of master capitalist. His danger will be that of the aristocrat in the Victorian, or industrial, era, the tendency to isolation unconcerned with the title of his position, as the mechanical forces of physical determinism submerge the individual, more and more ruling out the play of impulse and idealism by which

alone men triumph. The mechanical order in which we live is only a process in the chain of progress, but its present-day effects stifle both thought and vision. The philosopher cannot dream, the mechanician cannot think, the politician cannot govern. They turn to one another for guidance, so far in vain. And yet the missing link is simple enough. The word is spirituality. It is not the system so much that is wrong as its working. On the one hand, private ownership; on the other, human rights; the struggle rages round the interpretation or distribution of reward. This clearly is a human battle, and just because it is human it must therefore be soluble.

Viewed in this light a truth emerges, which seems intelligently hopeful. It is that capital is vital—capitalists are not vital. That is basic, central to the problem; all else is mechanism. Materialism has gone wrong because it has neglected the ethical sense of man, because it has sought to tie man to his mechanism, which is like placing the ship on the captain's bridge. Marx, too, omitted individualism; thus capitalism has become non-human and Socialism has become non-human. This is where what we call liberation begins and the old politics end, and it is here that the new captain of industry must take the field. What does this mean? Only this, that the mechanical order must be humanised. Just as philosophy is going back to metaphysics, so industry must go back to individualism. In a word, we recognise the relativities of social energies: we recover the control of our mechanism. We regain the power to moderate and adjust, we disconnect the thesis of absolutism. And as relativity is the apparent law of the universe and motion its justification, so in the materialism of life man is the atom of development. Bolshevism is the soulless answer to a soulless mechanisation, in itself a truly pitiful ideation of a rival determinism, spiritless and so non-productive. Economically, it is not even intelligent. To those who have eyes to see its experiment enforces a world lesson. We see in Europe conflicting groups of politicians pulling at the bars of a system which both fail to understand, and which constricts them, while those who do understand look on now with astonished fear, now with amusement. Yet what they fight is merely a single hate, a single fear, a single interest. The one seeks to destroy

the integument, the other the integrant. Both are futile. The light burns midway between them—Man. He sees the one set frantically trying to subordinate man to the mineral, gold; the other frantically trying to subordinate gold to man, as if the sole issue of life was money, which indeed was apparently Marx's idea. The whole thing is, of course, only an incident in our economic development, and already Lenin has discovered that the enemy is not credit or the mechanism, but the rigidity of its control, which is a human problem. Thus, as we stand, Russia seeks to get back to a system of exchange while we seek to escape from it. Out of the conflict the new human order will arise, derived from the relativities of ordered composition. Already we catch glimpses of the coming orientation in the liberating movements around us. We have discovered that credit is international; we are discovering that religion and humanity too may be international, single in spirit, cosmic in application, spheric in constructive irradiation. The great thing to seize upon is the idea of man; what is his purpose, what his evolutionary design? To what end are the creative emanations of art and science, of invention and philosophy, of religion and service, if progress is not to be the recognised fulfilment of existence? Is not the unit the force of the unity? What matters is life, and man who projects the life. That is where the system, as we know it, fails. It can no longer project reasonably and hopefully because it has lost the moral purpose which alone is our ultimate master. It was to this intangible source of wealth that England owes her world position. Always we have projected. Always we have thrown up liberators. Always we have been crusaders, the weavers of a co-ordinating plan.

Uncontrollable financial power, uncontrollable individual wealth—these have become social excrescences in an intelligent commonwealth, nodules of degeneration, and the new tool-power statesman will not be afraid to adjust them. It is not capital that is wrong, or work that is the enemy, or even inequality; rather is it a system which no longer serves the communal interest of service and utility. We see its evils in guinea-pig directors, in the fraudulent finance of companies and their promoting, in the orgy of gambling which has cocained this once scrupulous people. It is our "flight from the mark." Can England live as

a poverty problem? No. What then? Much will depend upon the master-builders of industry; their real enemy is a credit system which serves the call of finance rather than of production, which has made them not arbiters but the jackals of their trade. The industrial problem to-day is the consumer's credit. We are leaving the iron era. We are entering upon the credit-power era. In other words, man will regain control of the symbols of wealth, and so of his destiny.

Once more we must be the pilgrims, setters out on a world journey; we cannot stand still, just folding our arms. The master capitalist is no more on his trial than are any one of us, yet he is on his trial. Look at our land lying by the million acres idle, while a million and a half men crowd idle in the cities! What is the meaning of this insensate waste? What are politicians for that they permit so savage a thing? We are face to face with the breakdown of a system. A system of inequitable distribution, here of gorging wealth, there of zones of waste, squalor, idleness, and degradation. Clearly a system in need of repair, of intelligent thought, of reorganisation, of restatement. Is this all that we can do? Of course not. The solution, as always, lives in man's liberating spirit. To those who would be captains in the necessary reconstruction, the call has come. It is to lead. To perform. Let our captains cull thought from the Charter of Shelley and on the wings of Science and Art together make " this earth, our home, more beautiful."

Contrairy Mary

By Edwin Pugh

Grey Foot Street is an unsavoury by-way in that most unsavoury of towns, Widnes. The folk who exist within its precincts—for theirs can hardly be called a life—do many grievous things unmentionable to ears polite, and use language that is more direct than delicate. They are unsightly and unclean, and there is not even the redeeming virtue of variety in their uniform repulsiveness. Indeed, these shameless, sulphuretted creatures have not even grace enough to be picturesque in their squalor.

But romance is a hardy flower, ungrudging of its perfume. It blooms in the unlikeliest places. Even here, in this acid-eaten waste of dismal swamp, where the only growth is a rancid green fungus, slimy and horrible, and the only water consists of stagnant pools iridescent with foulness—even here it raises its dauntless, dainty head and flutters its bright petals in the tainted air. And oftenest it blows sweetest near to grimy toil-worn hands. Plucked by nerveless fingers whose joints are all warped and discoloured by creeping disease, it lives and thrives under greasy, slack bodices, dying only when the hearts into which it strikes its roots are cold and still.

High above the weedy undergrowth of petty, carking cares and sordid aspirations that clog the bosoms of the dwellers in this darkest of the world's dark places it flourishes and bourgeons, aromatic and beautiful, tracing on the dull, drab background of inconsequent lives golden schemes of woven colour, healing with its balm of fragrance the scars that unkind memories have left, so that every bruised, numbed heart is the better for its burden.

Even the starved heart of Contrairy Mary was lighter, though the scarce unfolded bud of romance that sprung into being in the springtime of her sorry youth drooped sadly under the bitter saltness of her tears.

She was called Contrairy Mary because her nature was so closely akin to that of the heroine of a popular nursery-rhyme.

She was a big-jawed, dull-eyed girl with no charms of manner or graces of form to recommend her to the notice of any eligible young man. She had been a sack and bag maker in Liverpool until her father, falling a victim to "Roger"—the local name for the fœtid chlorine gas which is pumped on to slaked lime to make bleaching powder—was bereft of the use of his lower limbs, and must perforce lie idle for the remainder of his days; and then she had to return home and eke out a livelihood for herself and her helpless sire—she had no mother—by washing and mending the heavy woollen clothes and mufflers of the beer-sodden, death-ridden alkali workers. It was a hard life, and the path she trod seemed to lead to a rayless future. But she did not complain. With the wondrous sweet patience of women which passeth man's understanding she did what work was to her hand, and waited—and prayed, perhaps—and hoped.

And at last it would seem that she had her reward, for a man fell in love with her. She knew that this was so because he passed and re-passed her door so frequently and so needlessly, and always said, with a wide, shamefaced smile revealing his toothless gums: "I see thee, Mary, standin' theer."

He was a salt-cake man who toyed all day with vitriol in a private hell that he shared with two mates at the Shoonah Chemical Works, and whose body threw off fumes of hydrochloric gas and chloride of manganese in little gusty whiffs of a choking pungency as he strode along the puddled side-walk on his homeward way.

But if, in Widnes, a salt-cake man be not downright hideous, then he is accounted handsome; and Joe Walters, as he was named, had all his limbs and even a coronal of fair, curling hair crisping about his hollow brow. He was, moreover, a big man, and upright, and free-stepping. And he earned a fair wage at the Works, drawing the black ash and turning the salt, eight hours a day, at the fiery maw of the deadly revolving furnaces.

So that Contrairy Mary was well pleased with her bashful admirer.

There was that in his eyes—a look of glad interest in her—which she found it hard to meet without thrilling and flushing. It sent her indoors with flaming cheeks and a light on her face that kindled it to an unaccustomed evanescent beauty. And she knew—she knew!—that he was hers as well as she knew that she was his whenever he cared and dared to claim her. But there was a great wall of diffidence between them; and until that invisible barrier could be broken down their intimacy could not advance beyond the nodding, chaffing phase.

It was during this halcyon time that Contrairy Mary made a friend.

She had never had a friend before: there had been no room in her humdrum life for any sentimental dalliance of that sort. The friend's name was Martha. Her mother had been a blue-bed woman way up at some white-lead mills in Newcastle-on-Tyne; and Martha had been born—in Bootle—with a twisted body and a nervous affection of the spine that set her head nodding ridiculously in moments of unusual agitation or emotional excitement.

She was quite a new-comer to the neighbourhood, even as Contrairy Mary was. And perhaps it was their common loneliness that mutually attracted them—that and the accident of propinquity; for she lived at the extreme top and back of the house adjoining that in which Mary lived with her bedridden, peevish father.

The two girls first met on the crazy " leads " abutting on the rear of the houses, under their windows. Every day they climbed out on to this dingy eyrie to enjoy the smoky evening breezes. Sometimes they would sit there and chat, with a piece of sewing or knitting in their laps, until the night was an hour or two old.

That abomination of desolation which formed the landscape lay outspread all about them, under their unheeding gaze. A dreary, weary outlook: an outlook bleak and unpromising as their own life-prospects. It was all a tangle of iron gear: girders and wheels and cranes and swinging gangways above a cat's-cradle of railway lines, and grotesquely diversified by lofty smoke shafts and strange shapes of domed towers like Moslem mosques, and mighty swart masses of masonry looming huge and dark under a pale pearly glare of gaseous vapour.

The open sewers flashed prismatic gleams to the star-dusted, moon-bathed sky. Barges lay aslant on the ooze of the canal banks like gigantic sleeping saurians, showing red, pulsing flares in the velvety gloom. But there was none of that infernal beauty, hectic and Doréesque, which redeems the frank unsightliness of most other teeming hives of industry by night. The chimneys poured out only thin pale wreaths of smoke to obscure the heavens. There was no ruddy, fitful glow of fire to puncture or enliven the solid, opaque blackness of the huddled sheds and factories.

Their friendship was barely a fortnight old when Contrairy Mary, one warm still night in the summer-time, confided her romance to Martha. It was odd to hear the faltering, shy words that fell from the coarse lips, and to contrast their spirit and tone with the heavy-jawed, expressionless face of her who uttered them. From motives which she could not have defined to herself—but they arose out of the universal feminine desire to reserve one morsel of its most cherished secrets for private delectation—Contrairy Mary suppressed the name of her admirer. Martha listened to her confession with rapt, eager interest.

" Ah, Mary, an' I'm right glad as it's like that wi' thee, too," she said.

Contrairy Mary started, surprised. She was sitting in the shadow, against a great black stack of crooked chimneys belching out a cloud of smoke that veiled her face from the light of the sky.

" I reckon as 'ee thought," said Martha, her poor head nodding violently, " as a poor, crippled, dodderin' thing like I be aren't no right to ha' aught to do wi' love and sech? "

" Nay, Martha. I reckon as 'ee ought to be loved, now, better'n a many gals, d'ye see, on 'count o' thy affliction," replied Contrairy Mary awkwardly.

Martha regarded her with wistful eyes. " Aw the same," said she slowly, " 'ee canna rightly fancy a chap carin' for Oi, canst 'ee, noo? "

" Ay, but I can jest that," was the earnest rejoinder. " For thou'st a rare sweet face like—so kind it is an' nice an' all. I reckon as a chap might go a long way further and find a sight worse lass than thou be'st! "

Martha smiled tremulously. " That be only what thou say'st. But it be right good o' thee to say it, aw the same, Mary."

" Tell me aboot thy sweetheart," whispered Mary.

" Ay, but can I? For he be—no doubt of it—the best an' the straightest lad in aw the world! "

" In coorse."

" Ay, but he be that! "

" So be mine."

" Then God ha' made two on him, that's aw."

" What be his name? " asked Mary.

The answer fell clear as a jewel falling into the clear depths of a fathomless pool: " Joe Walters."

There was a long pause, then Mary repeated softly: " Joe . . . Walters."

" Joe being short for Joseph," murmured Martha dreamily.

" Short for Joseph," Mary echoed.

" What be thy lad's name? Thou'st never told me that," said Martha.

" It——it don't matter aboot him," was the hasty reply. " Tell me aboot——Joe—short for Joseph—first. Is he ——do 'ee love 'ee true, now? "

Martha's head bobbed spasmodically as she blinked her eyes and sniffed.

" Ay, he used to," said she. " But he——he ha' cooled off——like——a bit——lately. I axed un aboot it, I did, a day or two gone, an' he toold me as he ha' got his eye on another lass. I don't knaw who t' hussy be, but I'd like to tear the eyes out on her, so I would. I toold un as mooch, an' he seemed fairly put out wi' me. ' Mebbe she won't ha' me,' he sez. ' I ha'n't axed her, not yet,' he sez. ' What'll 'ee do if she wunna ha' thee? ' I sez. ' I'll marry thee, I reckon,' sez he."

" An wouldst 'ee marry un after that an aw? "

" I'd do jest annything to get Joe," snivelled Martha. " 'Tis hard to be a makeshift, but I reckon as I could bide e'en that——to get un."

" I'd ne'er put up wi' the like o' that myself," said Mary hoarsely.

" Ay, but you be different! " cried Martha. " There be a plenty o' chances for thee. And mebbe 'ee be'n't as

fond-like o' thy lad as I be o' Joe." She wiped her eyes. "It do seem crool hard!" she whimpered. "I ha' little enow to make me happy, God above knaw'st. An' now it do seem as if I be gooin' to lose Joe! I can't tell what I'll do. For she be sure to have un. Nawbuddy could help a-lovin' Joe. I always did fear as he were too good for Oi."

She bowed her head on her hands and wept. Contrairy Mary, her fingers tightly interlocked, sat motionless, her face lifeless as a death-mask. Presently Martha looked up.

"You never would believe how I ha' cried aboot it," she said. "Every night I lay a-thinkin' on un. I only come to live here so as to be nigher to un. An' he ha' only come once to see me since e'er I come. An' once he used to come every day."

Contrairy Mary shifted restlessly on her uneasy seat.

"Don't 'ee fret now, Martha," said she. "'Twill aw come right for 'ee."

"How can I help it? You don't rightly knaw. Oh, it do seem crool 'ard!"

Contrairy Mary rose unsteadily and went and laid her hand on Martha's head.

"'Twill aw come right for 'ee, Martha," she repeated, and stooped suddenly and kissed her weeping friend on the forehead. Then, with a hasty "Good night!" she climbed back into her own room and pulled down the window.

She dropped on her bed and lay there, looking with wide, unseeing eyes at the dingy ceiling.

For half an hour she lay there; and then she heard the hoot of a steam-horn, announcing that the day-shift at the Shoonah Chemical Works was over. She rose and tired her abundant hair, and donned her best Sunday frock. She went down to the front door and stood there, waiting. The alkali hands were pouring in a black stream across the end of Grey Foot Street. Presently one man detached himself from the crowd and bore down erratically upon her.

As he came within speaking range he halted.

"Ah, I see thee, Mary, standin' theer!" he chuckled boorishly.

She lifted her broad chin stiffly. "Be a sight too free, Muster Walters," said she.

He stared at her in blank amaze.

"Why, what be the matter wi' thee, lass?" he cried. "Hast done aught to put thee oot?"

"Mebbe. Mebbe not. But my——my cha-ap——"

"Thy chap! Never knaw'd——"

"Nor axed me, neether. But I ha', d'ye see? An' I reckon he'll fetch thee a lick o' the lug if thou comest it wi' me, now. Thou'd better 'op it!"

And she went in and slammed the door in his face.

THEATRE-CRAFT
Editors: Hermon Ould and Horace Shipp

Blast!

Or Words to that Effect

By H. F. Rubinstein

". . . In view of these real differences, it is hard to understand why any author who is capable of writing a good novel should ever write a play; and, as the present state of dramatic literature shows, he usually doesn't."
—REBECCA WEST.

WHAT are " these real differences "? the reader will enquire —assuming he does not happen to have read, Heaven knows how many years ago, the diatribe of that first female and most deadly of the species Superman, from which I have ventured to detach the text for my little homily. . . . (I should explain that I have been asked to say a few words on a subject that always rouses the worst passions in me.) What *are* the differences—between novel and play—that provoke the popular " highbrow " novelist to crow so lustily over the unpopular " highbrow " dramatist? That he is in a position to crow is self-evident. But " even dogs have daylight," and it may be permitted to question the merits of the " case " presented in this characteristic Western passage leading up to the lucid and illuminating dictum already quoted :—

" Detestable to the mind that can make a copy of the dawn in exquisite words to have to hand the job over to the scene-painter; cramping for one who has been accustomed to trail a story through the four seasons and round the globe to have to cabin it on the smallness of a stage; infuriating to the mind that can tell exactly in a single phrase how Mabel gave away the secret of her soul when she cast down her eyes, to have to see Miss Mary Smith wrestling through weeks of rehearsal to get that effect with an unsuitable personality and koholed eyelashes; humiliating to the mind that could demonstrate that it, too, was a creator and omniscient about its creatures, by writing superhumanly intuitive pages about what passed in the heart of the young girl as she broke from the room and ran into the darkness, to have to bite it all back and set down, 'Exit Mabel, L.'! . . ."

In short—to recede yet a little further (I present these pickings without any apology, for, like everything Miss

West writes, they brilliantly bear quotation)—we are to understand that Dickens was " typical of the writer of his time " in that he " discovered in the novel an art-form a thousand times more obedient and more flexible than the play can ever be."

The argument is presentable—yet so grossly fallacious that a single word will suffice to demolish it. You have only to interpose an expostulatory " Shakespeare ! " after every clause of that formidable indictment, and—what remains? Shakespeare admitted into the select fellowship of Messrs. Hugh Walpole and A. S. M. Hutchinson under the chaperonage of the antediluvian scene-painter (a subject for Max Beerbohm !). Shakespeare taking us through the four seasons, and round (and outside) the globe in poor, cramped, cabined *King Lear*. Miss Mary Smith, with her kohled eyelashes (whatever they may be), wrestling through weeks of rehearsal to reveal the secret of Viola's heart in the words, " She never told her love." A hand setting down the direction " Exit above," after the 138th line of the second scene of the second act of *Romeo and Juliet*, and thereby humiliating the mind of a creator and omniscient beside whom every novelist so far evolved is a pigmy. . . . I will pass on.

". . . It is hard to understand why any author who is capable of writing a good novel should ever write a play; and, as the present state of dramatic literature shows, he usually doesn't."

Let us—at whatever sacrifice—put aside, for the moment, the question of the present state of dramatic literature. It is no harder to understand why novelists do not write plays than it is to understand why epic poets do not write sonnets. They occasionally do. Good novelists occasionally write bad plays; good playwrights occasionally write bad novels. (Zangwill is an example of the former, Shaw of the latter.) There even have been, and are, writers who excel in both arts—such as (to go no further afield) Clemence Dane and Allan Monkhouse—just as there are painters who can write, musicians who can paint, and what not. There was once Leonardo da Vinci. . . . The fact remains that the art of the novelist and the art of the playwright are almost fundamentally different. As all art aims at interpreting life, and as each approaches its task through a different medium, so, in their pure forms (to put it shortly),

the novel may be said to interpret by description, the play by representation.

If it is a question of taking sides (of course it isn't, but let it pass), since Miss West has plumped so emphatically for the novel, I will dare to avow my own inveterate predilection for the play. It is assuredly nearer the heart of life, since it demands, for its fullest exhibition, the co-operation of actual breathing men and women, with their myriad and complex powers of suggestion and elaboration; providing nothing less (and, good Heavens, how much more!) than a piece of "potted" life—a potential re-creation in essence and atmosphere, as well as in appearance, of human society at any place and period, and, indeed, on any plane. . . . An art for the Gods!

So much for the "real differences" between the art-forms of the novel and the play. So much as may enable us to appreciate the issues involved in a consideration of the present state of dramatic literature. What the——? (I will exercise all possible restraint, but there are limits to human endurance). . . . What does Miss West know about the present state of dramatic literature? It would be more to the point to ask, What does she care? Anyone who does care, and who therefore knows, will tell her that an author who is capable of writing a good novel, and who may also be capable of writing a good play, prefers the former pursuit, for the very good reason that there is a "living" in it. There is a market for good novels; there is no market for good plays. I could a hundred tales unfold. . . . Not so long ago a mild hullabaloo was raised over the difficulties of "placing" a first novel. I remember a first *play*, produced, many years since, by a provincial repertory company, applauded locally, positively acclaimed in London, where it led to an extension of the company's annual season, and taken to America, where it provided, according to a prominent London daily, "one of the intellectual successes of the American stage" (its success did not extend to the material plane, but that is another story). Its author followed it up with further "intellectual successes" at repertory theatres, stage societies, and the like. His work—or the small proportion of it so exposed—has been recognised by dramatic critics as possessing distinct literary and artistic merit. . . . *And he has yet to find a*

publisher for his maiden effort! The wonder is that, under existing conditions, there should be left in England anyone seriously devoted to drama as an art. Yet there is no dearth of dramatic literature—in manuscript; and intelligent typists do moderately well out of it. For the rest, of the not inconsiderable number of playwrights producing work of at least as high a quality as the " younger school " of novelists, possibly half a dozen—by luck or cunning—contrive to make it pay . . . and one is a Shaw and another a Barrie! The situation is so delightfully simple. The theatre magnates " have no use for " a play (outside a Shaw or a Barrie) that emits however faint a flavour of the literary or " arty." " That's a play to *read*," they tell you. You take it to the publisher, who tells you that people will not read plays—except Shaw's and West End successes. . . . And he may be right. After all, people read what they are told to read, and did not the *doyen* of our dramatic critics himself, as recently as December 6th, 1922, confess, in his waggish way, that he never *could* take to reading—dramatic literature. (" I suppose it is very reprehensible, but . . . to read the lot," he protested, in allusion to four plays sent him for review, " is not to be thought of.") . . .

Meanwhile Miss Horniman, our help in ages past, has had to " shut up shop." . . . And, on the Continent, the biggest dramatic movement since the Elizabethan " push " continues to make steady headway.

Who's to blame? Where's the remedy? What's to be done? These are interesting questions into which I have neither space nor time to enter. I am thankful to say I have other fish to fry.

First Aid to Managers

A Review of Tendencies in 1922

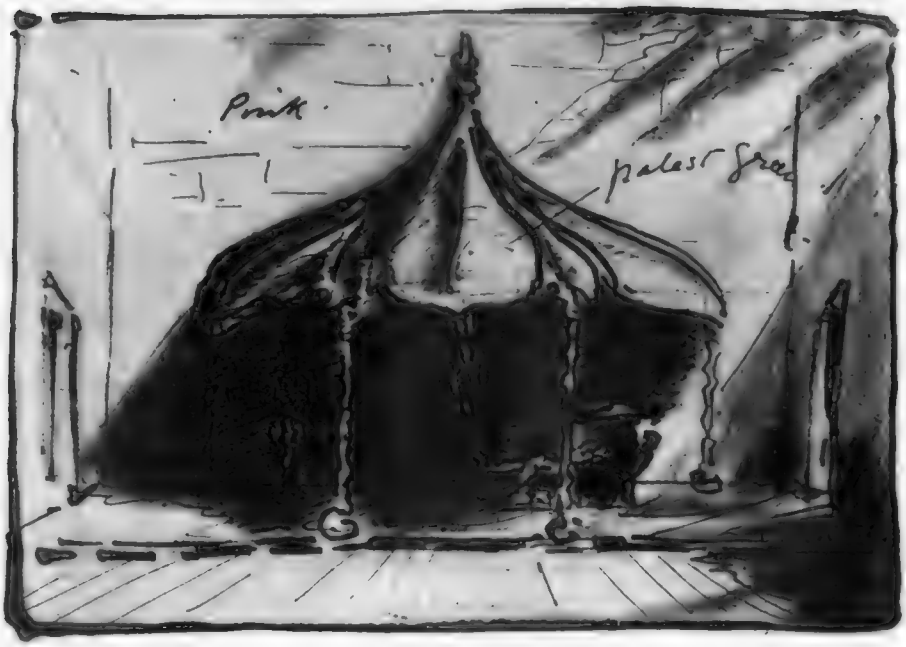
By Horace Shipp

In face of almost overwhelming evidence to the contrary, I assume that the gentlemen who control the destinies of the English theatre are anxious to achieve something approaching success.

I do not mean at the moment "artistic" success or anything highbrow; I do not mean service to the community such as might stand them in good stead at the Day of Judgment; but merely success as they themselves dream of it in the lounge chairs of expensive clubs—a bringing of the overdraft to reasonable proportions, and a theatre sufficiently full of happy people who have paid for their seats to make the actors' work endurable and keep the box-office telephone ringing. It sounds obvious to say that this desirable material result comes primarily from studying the wishes of the public, with the prizes of the profession going to those who anticipate and stimulate the tendencies of taste. Were it not so vulgar, one would dare to draw an analogy from the exact science of anticipating caprice in the matter of women's clothes, but as a practising idealist I will assume to know nothing of such matters and return to the problem in the theatre.

Looking back over 1922, it is interesting to extricate those tendencies which mark the successful productions, and, with all the diffidence of a person who has not yet lost even one fortune in the theatre, to record them; or, rather, to reiterate them, for they are of a piece with the theatrical faith which we have expounded in Theatre-Craft and elsewhere often before. A fundamental tenet of that faith is that good theatre work—that which in managerial circles is called "highbrow"—has equal opportunity of appeal with the low-brow and the no-brow, or whatever are the correct antonyms.

Scene design by William Nicholson
for "Polly."
(Kingsway Theatre, London.)



Scene design by William Nicholson
for "Polly."
(Kingsway Theatre, London.)

Setting by Emil Pirchan for Walter Braunfel's opera "Die Voegel." (State Opera, Berlin.)

The presence in London of "The Beggar's Opera," "The Immortal Hour," "Polly," and "Hänsel and Gretel" seems to indicate a reviving interest in opera. We think it not irrelevant to give in this issue specimens of the staging of opera in other countries.

Setting by Theodore Komisarjevsky
for Molière's "Le Mariage Forcé."

FIRST AID TO MANAGERS.

The obstinate successes of the year certainly include Mr. Galsworthy's plays, the *Beggar's Opera* (now working towards its first eternity), and revivals of Barrie and Pinero; the Galsworthy cycle at the Court in the early part of the year, the Shaw season at the Everyman, and the outstanding triumph of *Peer Gynt* at the Old Vic add to the list; whilst the autumn season contributes *The Immortal Hour*, *The Cenci*, and *Mary Stuart*. The consistently high level of work and success at the Old Vic brings further tribute; and when one analyses a success of the type of *Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure* it is to realise that, although it is an indifferent affair as dramatic literature, it has achieved public support because of the excellent acting of Hawtrey.

I realise that from the viewpoint of the highest art of the theatre much of this work must be placed quite firmly in category B, but I cite the list as a warning to those who still believe the level of theatre-going intelligence to be C_3. It was at the commencement of the autumn season that I evidenced elsewhere this faith, in alarm at some of the proposals of managers for their new plays. The shrieks of indignation which came from people who thought this constructive criticism was undermining the English theatre and proceeded to reiterate my list (with comic additions of their own) revealed chiefly how fundamentally we agreed except in the important matter of taste. In a spirit of passionate controversy the point was scored by both sides in this curious argument that good plays were as likely to be successful as bad; moreover, everybody agreed upon the desirability of producing good. Why then, one might ask, ever produce bad ones? Depend upon it that the public can sense the difference. A manager as popular as is Mr. Nigel Playfair presents, under favourable circumstances, so tried a favourite as Arnold Bennett; the play is poor, and a quiet frost settles upon it. *The Immortal Hour* succeeds it; good production, good music, good staging—and success. That is part of the theatrical history of the year.

It would be misleading optimism to deduce that good work always wins at the expense of the mediocre. There has been a proportion of failures among the worthy, a proportion of successes among the banal and unintelligent. The efforts of the Benrimo management would have

received more solid encouragement if the theatrical public mind was consistently set in the direction of good work, and on the other hand . . . But the exaltation of the unworthy is not a fit matter for detailed contemplation. If we can establish the fact that the intelligent production of real drama may easily prove synonymous with a box-office triumph, can show from a year's survey of the stage that *The Wild Duck* is more to popular taste than *The Singing Duck*, we may induce managers to cast out fear.

Personally, I believe that the competition of the kinema will press increasingly hard upon those who use the theatre to cater for cheap sensation or sentiment. It will out-vie stupidity. The best work is beyond the reach of that competition, and a cultivated and cultured public is a loyal public to whom the theatre is a need rather than a luxury.

One other theatrical event of the year argues for the preference of such a public. In January we stood in the rooms of the Municipal Museum at Amsterdam, and, watching the enthusiasm of visitors, we wished that England might show such initiative in organising, such intelligence in appreciating an exhibition of pure theatre art. The wish was made the more poignant by the fact that the English section was among the largest in Amsterdam and revealed a deal of fine work being done for the stage. Throughout the summer months that wish was amply fulfilled. The Exhibition drew crowds to South Kensington, beyond the expectations of the authorities and the hopes of those of us who formed the committee. The rooms were always full—usually uncomfortably so; the period of the Exhibition was extended, and still there were crowds. Those crowds were *the public* interested in the scenic side of theatre art. Since the inception of THEATRE-CRAFT we have stood consistently for the need of having the artist in the theatre, for consolidating his position there. We have believed that the business of the visual presentation of drama was his affair, and not that of the West-End furniture dealer. The success of this Exhibition in London, and the repetition of that success in Manchester, has shown again that the public responds to the magnetism of art in the theatre. The inference is for the managers to profit by.

Theatre art, poetic and imaginative drama, music drama, literary drama: these things have more than held their own in nineteen twenty-two. Nineteen twenty-three?

Does the Theatre Matter?

By Hermon Ould

We live in a thrilling age. The greatest war of historic times has been fought and lost by most of the belligerents. Famine has reaped three million victims in Russia. Austria has crept to the brink of an abyss and may yet topple over. Ireland groans in the anguish of internal troubles. Germany and France glare at each other in unceasing hatred. In Italy the Fascisti, in England the Unemployed! The process of disintegration has begun. The old order changeth. . . .

But what has all this to do with the theatre? Judging by the advertisement columns of the Press, nothing! The theatre, apparently, is regarded as a means of escape from "all this." Our unwillingness to look life in the face is disquieting; and the theatre seems to provide one of the most flagrant instances of a condition which is becoming chronic. An art which is divorced from the life of its times is a decadent art—not, therefore, without interest, but without permanent value as art or present value as a social activity. After all, then, what does the theatre matter? Matter, I mean, in any deeper sense than the sense in which perfumes, *Crême de Menthe*, tobacco, and pretty frocks matter? If the theatre is to be considered as on the same level as these amenities, good! We know where we are. Let our theatrical performances be as good in their way as the best brands of cigars are in theirs—of exquisite flavour, a convenient accessory of social intercourse, and . . . gently narcotic. A jaded community would be satisfied.

The success of Barrie is a symptom of this passion for evasion. It is the unexpressed theme of most of his plays. He creates a world of rosy sentiment and invites us to accept it as real. He knows it is not real, his admirers know it is not real; but reality is so ugly and life so brutal that they are prepared to accept an agreeable fiction for the duration of the play. Barrie's only alternative to this false sentimentalism is cynicism. The most cynical play now

running in London is *Shall we Join the Ladies?* in which most of the characters are shady ladies and gentlemen moving in the highest circles of society. Prick a cynic and a sentimentalist bleeds. If Barrie had completed this play, it is doubtful if he would have had the courage to steer clear of a sentimental ending.

Not that cynicism is any better than sentimentalism. It is the obverse of the same untruth. If the theatre is to play any part in the building of a new civilisation it will need to reflect life honestly and honourably—not, of course, realistically. The theatre should be a sensitive compass-needle, responding to the unexpressed currents of emotion of the times. There is an England which never gets into the newspapers. England is not represented by the ladies who engage unemployed workmen to wait up all night in a queue outside the Central Criminal Court to enable them to hear the Ilford murder trial, but it is those ladies who receive the attention of the Press. There is a vast inarticulate England, ignored by the Press, which might be inspired to noble utterance if the right stimulus were applied. They are Thomas Hardy's " pale pathetic people," an uncomplaining, imponderable mass who accept what is given to them without question.

If the function of the theatre is merely to give these people something to take their minds from the affairs of life, to provide three hours' amusement to follow on a day's toil, then the theatre does not inadequately fulfil its purpose. Much could be urged in favour of this view of the theatre, and if only it were universally accepted some of us would be spared a good deal of the bitterness born of the contemplation of a besmirched ideal. Unfortunately for our tranquillity, one sees signs here and there that a larger conception of the theatre is still cherished by certain unquenchable spirits.

The critics are not altogether guiltless in the matter. The standard of judgment is absurdly low and shifting, and few dramatic critics seem to be well equipped with a technical knowledge of the art which it is their business to criticise. There is no music critic of any importance who has not a thorough acquaintance with the theory of music, but there are few dramatic critics whose familiarity with the theatre extends beyond the auditorium side of

those beloved footlights to which they so fondly cling. This may be one of the reasons why music in England is taken so much more seriously than the theatre. At no reputable concert hall in London would it be possible to give performances of works which did not attain a fairly high level of technical achievement. Even the " popular " concerts at Queen's Hall shunt the cheaper items to the end of the programme. The English music-lover has become familiar with the best music of all countries, and the critic who wishes to secure his respect must mind his p's and q's and not be caught napping in matters of technique.

Recently the Stage Society produced a play by Mr. C. K. Munro entitled *The Rumour*. It was referred to by several critics as being in the " German expressionist manner." The statement is nonsensical, and reveals one of two things: lack of understanding or ignorance. The only way in which Mr. Munro's play resembled the plays of the German expressionists was in the splitting up of the action into a large number of scenes—a method employed by Shakespeare and Captain Bruce Bairnsfather. Mr. Munro's play (except when it was farcical) was realistic: the German expressionists are never realistic. Mr. Munro's play was wordy and his method of emphasis was by repetition: the German expressionist method of using language is to condense it almost to the point of unintelligibility! Mr. Munro's play was direct in its utterance, his *dramatis personæ* " characters " in the usual sense: the German expressionists generally express themselves symbolically, sometimes elliptically, and their *dramatis personæ* are usually personified forces, institutions, tendencies, rather than normal human beings. In short, Mr. Munro and the German expressionists have about as much in common as Mr. Arnold Bax and John Sebastian Bach, and when it is realised how inconceivable it is that any music critic of standing should make the latter comparison, it will be realised how much lower the standard of dramatic criticism is.

If the critics took the theatre seriously, the public might be induced to do so; if the public took the theatre seriously, a few more authors, and even the theatrical speculators, might be inspired to emulation. And the end might be a Theatre!

THE
ENGLISH REVIEW

The America Peace View

By Theodore Stanfield

WHEREAS in former days war was conducted by armies consisting of a small percentage of the belligerent nations' population, in our day it has degenerated into a struggle between their entire populations. The total human, industrial, and financial resources of a nation will henceforth have to be thrown into the consuming flame of war. During the nineteenth century, with all its wars, including Napoleon's campaigns and our own Civil War, five million soldiers were killed, while in the recent war of four years' duration over ten millions were killed, over fifteen millions were wounded, and tens of millions of civilians—men, women, and children—were destroyed. As Justice John H. Clarke, of the United States Supreme Court, well said: "The resort to applied science for agencies for the destruction of life and property in the late war warns us that unless our civilisation devises some means to make an end of war, war will make an end of our civilisation."

Science is increasing the slaughtering power of weapons, of chemicals, and of gases by leaps and bounds. Indeed, the next great war threatens to exterminate most of the inhabitants of large sections of the earth's crust. This peril has already aroused the strongest of all human instincts, the instinct of the preservation of life. That instinct and man's reason are now entering upon a conflict with man's greed and his lust for power. To this conflict may well be ascribed the phenomena of the present world-wide effort to abolish war. While another and more murderous war may be necessary before the mass of men realise the danger of race suicide by war, who, surveying the marvellous accomplishments of man, a puny creature scarcely six feet high, a mere speck by comparison with the forty-two million feet of the earth's diameter, can believe that this conscious reasoning and

moral being will not, before it is too late, perceive and avert this danger? Who can believe that mankind will commit suicide rather than abolish war?

Although man knows not whence he came nor whither he goeth, he feels he is on the way. Physically, he is dominated by the instincts of self-preservation and reproduction, which together form an instinct, common to the individual and to the masses, to maintain human life on earth. Mentally, he is ruled by the instinct of curiosity for the truth about himself and his environment. Spiritually, he is moved by an instinctive faith in the worth and higher purpose of human life. His moral and ethical conceptions of right and wrong appear grounded in a combination of the desire to maintain life on earth and the impulse to believe in its worth and higher purpose. From these the conviction arises that whatever is constructive of physical and spiritual life is right, while whatever is destructive thereof is wrong.

Curiosity to understand himself and the forces of Nature impel the unceasing effort to discover the first cause of human life on earth and its ultimate end. This effort, this quest, this instinctive purpose, is the bond which unites the dead, the living, and the unborn. Whether or not they perceive it, all have the same objective. All are fellow-workers, partners, and comrades in the common effort to solve the riddle of the universe. How dazzling a joint adventure!

Every human being's existence and happiness depend upon his ability to adapt himself to his environment and his environment to himself. The net result of all human effort is a stock of ever-increasing knowledge of man's physical and spiritual nature and of his environment. The latter consists not only in the mere physical facts of his surroundings, but also in his understanding and his control of them. Although any individual's physical environment remains unchanged, except as he moves about on the earth's crust, mankind's knowledge of and power over these physical facts constantly increase.

As the tropical zone saps his energies and the arctic zone absorbs them, he crowds into the temperate zone, which is now almost filled up. Already in the temperate zone more people press upon some of its lands than they can

feed, clothe, and shelter. In consequence the less energetic dwellers in the tropics have had to be conquered and their raw materials and foodstuffs secured in exchange for the surplus human energies of the temperate zone, in the form of manufactures. The tropics are now either occupied by independent peoples or are parcelled out among the strongest groups of the temperate zone. The arctics have thus far yielded too little food, shelter, and clothing to arouse vigorous competition.

Constant warfare, interrupted by brief breathing spells of peace, naturally marked the epoch during which human beings have been populating and competing for the temperate zone and conquering the tropical and arctic zones. But now, in our day, we find the temperate zone parcelled out among the nations and almost filled up with peoples. We also find wide differences in density of population pressing for readjustment. We see mankind entering upon the final stage of this first epoch. We perceive a second epoch approaching, where the temperate zone is completely filled up.

Should not history be divided into such epochs rather than into ancient, mediæval, and modern? Was not ancient history modern history to the Roman? Will not modern history be mediæval history a thousand years hence? Would not a division of history into epochs of mankind's basic relations to the earth's crust direct itself to the realities of the story of human life on this earth, instead of to its mere superficial events?

When, early in the nineteenth century, it appeared that the population of the world was increasing much faster than the food supply, Malthus announced that only by positive checks, such as starvation, disease, war, and misery in all its forms, or by preventive checks upon excessive births, could the world's population be kept within the bounds of the world's food supply. During the nineteenth century England's people increased fourfold, Germany's threefold, and the population of the European continent as a whole rose from 200,000,000 to 400,000,000. Had it not been for the opening up of huge new food-producing areas in North and South America, Australia, and Africa, the pressure of population on food supply would have become acute early in the nineteenth century.

The population of the world, which in 1810 was estimated to be six hundred and eighty-two million people, has risen to about one thousand seven hundred millions and is increasing annually by about fifteen millions. At this rate, of about 1 per cent. per annum, it will double in about sixty-five years. The threat to life of insufficient food supply was not ignored by the human life instinct, nor yet dealt with by human reason. The readjustment of population to food supply was not left blindly to the positive checks, such as starvation, disease, war, and misery, nor were the preventive checks upon excessive births consciously, knowingly, publicly applied. Instinctively, subconsciously, and silently life protects itself against destruction. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the birth rate has declined in all civilised countries and is still falling. In England it fell from 35 per thousand per annum in the decade from 1850 to 1860 to 27 per thousand from 1900 to 1905; in France from 26 per thousand to 21, and in Germany from 36 or 37 to 33 or 34. The population of France is already stationary, while England's population will probably be stationary by the middle of this century.

In general, the marriage rate in most countries, though it shows a slight tendency to decline, has varied little. It is usually not far from eight per thousand. Any individual couple, if asked why it has deliberately chosen to have fewer children than its ancestors, would, of course, not ascribe its choice to a realisation that the world's population was increasing faster than the food supply. But the high cost of living, they would probably mention, is due to the increasing pressure of population on food supply. In the nineteenth century the human-life instinct, threatened by an inadequate food supply, has subconsciously adjusted itself to its changed environment. In the twentieth century the same most powerful of all instincts, threatened by modern war with the extermination of human life, has set to work to abolish war before war destroys life.

It thus appears that an examination of the fundamental facts of human life on earth compels the conclusion that international peace is ultimately inevitable. Is the intelligence and insight of our twentieth century sufficient to abolish war? That is the question.

The Great Corner in Gold

By Charles Percival Isaac

(Author of "The Menace of Money Power")

SOME twenty years ago an American millionaire named Leiter gained notoriety by an attempt to corner the world's wheat supply. Unfortunately for him and fortunately for the world, the attempt failed. Social moralists did not neglect to dwell upon the inequity of trying to hold the food of the masses to ransom. The economists did not, however, draw any lesson from the event, but have allowed it to fade from memory as merely a sensational incident due to the caprice, lust for gain, or overweening ambition of an individual.

Mr. Leiter's bid for control failed because his cash resources were insufficient and gave out when they were most needed. To-day the world faces a situation akin to the above, but vastly different in its development and its scope. Slowly but insistently a corner is being made, not in the world's wheat, but in the cash resources themselves. The situation is not the result of the arbitrary will of an individual, not of a sudden and impulsive bid for a quick profit, but of a continuous policy on the part of the financial machine of one of the world's greatest nations. How far the process has gone can be judged from the fact that the American financial system has already acquired 44 per cent. of the world's gold and, within a year, will, at the same rate, have in its possession over one-half of the total store.

It is generally assumed, as a matter upon which there need be no discussion, that this abnormal state of the world's finance has arisen out of the war, and that a counter-current will shortly show itself, resulting in a better distribution. The view is, moreover, commonly held on this side of the Atlantic that America is so glutted with gold that she herself would gladly get rid of the unwanted sur-

plus if she could find a practicable means of so doing. As this view is shared by men of financial standing in England it is entitled to some respect, although the reasons given in support of it are somewhat scanty. It is, indeed, to be presumed that the financiers of America would hardly continue over any length of time in a course of conduct that was harmful to themselves, yet, notwithstanding that America has been " glutted with gold " for the last three years, one observes with some surprise that further imports are being made. Indeed, the only purchasers of gold at present are America and India, and the former secures the major portion. It is not too clear upon whose account gold is still being bought for America, but it seems from such indications as appear in the financial Press that a fair proportion of it is engaged for import by the firm of Morgan and the Federal Reserve Board. As it is so extraordinary that these two important institutions should continue in a course of business that, from the viewpoint of English financial writers, is unprofitable, one is prompted to look at the matter more closely.

Every Briton is reared in at least one belief, namely, that London is the financial centre of the world. The belief entails the acceptance of the idea that the world's financial system is centralised. That London is the centre is the conclusion drawn from the fact that the greatest trade in foreign bills of exchange is and has been for many years carried on there. Business in foreign bills is, however, only one phase of finance, and its prevalence in London may be due to the purely geographical fact that London is in close propinquity to the Continent. If we try to determine the centre of the financial system from other indications we arrive at a different conclusion.

The world's financial system has certain general results. It leads to the accumulation of enormous fortunes by a favoured few, to the formation of trusts, to periodical crises, and to the centralisation of gold with the central banks of issue. The most striking manifestations of these four aspects of modern finance are not to be found in the accepted centre. Before the war America possessed the world's greatest multi-millionaires. It still does so. The modern trust system is making great headway in England at the present time, but it had its origin in America and it

has there reached a pitch of development not yet attained in England. The mere fact that trusts have never become a political issue in these islands while general elections have been fought on them in the United States shows how much more resented is the power possessed by the American combinations. With regard to the third criterion, it is to be observed that while London was not challenged by the rivalry of American finance the world's greatest crises took place in England, but since 1890 financial crises have been more pronounced in New York than here. In 1893 and 1907 America was the centre of the storm, while the post-war stringency reached its most acute stage across the Atlantic. An analogy may be made with a centralised telephonic system in which, for some reason, a huge number of calls are made. In such circumstances it would naturally be expected that the greatest pressure would be felt at the central exchange. As to the accumulation of gold stores, the belief that the American situation is solely the outcome of the war will not stand confrontation with the facts of the pre-war period. In July, 1914, American gold stores had reached £398,000,000, while the English stock was only £38,000,000. In the years from 1880 to 1914 the gold stocks of America had increased almost sixfold, those in England less than twofold, those in France and Germany just over twofold. The additions to the French and German stores were largely influenced by the deliberate policy of their Governments, adopted in 1906, to build up a huge reserve in case of war. The American gold store was under no such influence, yet it increased out of all proportion to those of other countries.

From the above considerations it is necessary to re-examine the doctrine that England is the world's financial centre and to ask ourselves whether the flow of gold to America is an entirely untoward post-war phenomenon which will be rectified by a natural reaction in a short time. The view frequently expressed in English financial papers that America is injuring herself by her accumulated store finds little echo in America. The supporters of this view hold that the increasing gold stocks must be used to give further credits to industry, or must lie idle. In the latter case they are merely unproductive wealth, representing a dead loss of revenue. In the former case, the additional

credits will operate as an inflation of purchasing capacity, increasing both prices and wages, and America will enter into a period similar to that experienced from 1915 to 1919, with the important exception that the world will not be clamouring for her products regardless of cost.

The dangers of such secondary inflation have already been faced and discussed at length in the periodical reviews of industry issued by the American banks, and it is worthy of note that none of the banking institutions of that country show the same concern about the future as their British counsellors show on their behalf. While anticipating that some rise in wages and prices may take place, they by no means despair of their ability so to furnish credits to industry that trade will benefit instead of being prejudiced. Moreover, they are rather prone to congratulate themselves upon the extraordinarily sound position of American finance and the prospects of industry in the future than to indulge in the self-commiseration one would expect to see. Nor is this only " window-dressing," a term that one has learnt to associate with modern banking. Frank A. Vanderlip, in his broad and able survey of the world's problems, outlined in his recently published book, *What Next in Europe?* lays stress upon the strength of the American financial system and the ease with which Europe could be furnished with credits. The divergence between the views of the American financiers and their English advisers is so marked that the question is worthy of consideration from a different angle.

It is evident that, given a stationary amount of industry in a country, a certain amount of gold will suffice to furnish currency and credit to enable that trade to be carried on. Any further increase in gold, assuming no expansion in trade, would merely result in a lessened efficiency in use. The American financial institutions do not, be it said, look forward to a stationary volume of internal trade, but anticipate a big increase in industry in the near future. There is, however, another aspect of the question that is somewhat lost to sight in dealing with the problem, though it affects Europe more profoundly than does the internal trade of America.

The economic processes of a nation are only the sum total of the economic actions of the corporations and

individuals within the nation. To ascertain to what use a nation will put its surplus cash resources we must ask ourselves to what use those firms usually put them that are fortunate enough to possess them, and what happens to those firms that are unfortunate enough to have an inadequacy of cash resources.

No student of industry during the present prolonged period of stringency can have failed to observe that a company's position cannot be properly appraised by a mere comparison of assets with liabilities. The reports of the directors frequently emphasise the difference in relative importance of what are unscientifically termed fixed and liquid assets. A plain-minded man might be excused for thinking that the fixed assets of an oil company were its pipelines, while its liquid assets were its stocks of oil. He would soon find that that was not the case. It is a pity that economists and industrialists should despise straightforward and definite terms and indulge in picturesque and misleading symbols. The up-to-date accountant well knows that, of a firm's assets, certain are more important than others, and in the balance sheet he arranges the assets in the order in which they can be realised. An analysis of the balance sheets of modern companies will show that the assets, when so arranged, fall naturally into four classes: (1) cash and marketable securities: (2) material, either raw, semi-manufactured or manufactured; (3) real capital (machines, buildings, etc.); (4) such assets as goodwill and patent rights. They can be correctly named, respectively, financial, material, capital, and intangible assets, and the order is that of their importance from the point of view of credit.

It is common knowledge that, in times of stringency, the intangible assets lose a great deal of their market value, that the capital assets may lie idle and can only be sold at a great loss, that the material assets can only be marketed with difficulty and that the credits issued by the banks upon them are restricted. In such times a company's solvency is largely determined by the amount of its financial assets.

I have before me the report of an industrial company which laments that, though its properties are intrinsically sound, yet it is obliged, owing to its lack of cash or suit-

able securities upon which to obtain bank credits, to mortgage its properties by the issue of debentures at the somewhat crushing rate of ten per cent. Another company, hitherto a constant dividend-payer, and showing a fair profit for the past year, regrets that, owing to the necessity of conserving its cash resources, it must forgo its dividend. These cases are not at all isolated, but are a fair representation of the state of industrial companies since the financial depression. It appears, therefore, that, in times of stringency, a company short of financial assets must mortgage its future productivity, and that a company with a sufficiency of financial assets must conserve them for future emergencies.

As a result of our present financial system, certain companies have come to the front in increasing strength and numbers in recent years that possess only one of the types of assets mentioned above. They have no materials, no real capital of their own at all, nor do they show any intangible assets in the shape of goodwill or otherwise. They have only financial assets, cash or investments in other concerns, and are known as financial trusts or holding companies. If industrial companies are penalised by shortage of financial assets, it is only to be expected that companies whose entire assets are financial in nature will be in a favourable position. A reference to the recently issued reports of such companies shows this to be the case. They congratulate themselves on having exchanged their investments in declining concerns for holdings in concerns that are recovering, with the result that their position is greatly strengthened. There is nothing remarkable in this; it is obvious that, in a period of depression followed by recovery, the inner knowledge accessible to holding companies allows their directors to sell out and buy in in advance of the private investor. Moreover, they are under no such constraint to conserve large cash surpluses as are industrial companies, since they can always obtain the cash they require by raising credit upon their marketable securities. They can therefore more readily employ their surplus resources to obtain a further holding in industrial companies.

If, however, a company's prospects are bound up with its financial assets more closely than with its other assets,

it follows that the nation with the greatest amount of such assets is favourably placed in relation to other nations, although the latter may possess equally good capital and material assets. The financial assets can be used to acquire holdings in industrial companies either at home or abroad. Such a nation is therefore in a favourable position to purchase control of foreign concerns. That the American financier is not behind his English compeer in his knowledge of this branch of economics is amply demonstrated by the fact that the system of financial trusts, or holding companies, has reached a much more advanced stage of development in America than here. It must be sufficiently clear to the financiers who control America's destiny that the glut of gold from which that country is alleged to be suffering can easily be removed by using the surplus gold to obtain a hold on foreign industries when the time comes. From the point of view of the rest of the world that time has already arrived. Governments are inundating New York with requests for loans. Industrial companies in Europe, the West Indies, South America and elsewhere are short of funds and would gladly obtain them from the United States, but, far from the American financiers being prepared to lend, they are showing themselves extremely coy, except in cases in which they can lend the money on their own terms. The law of supply and demand, which we have been taught to reverence, seems here to fail signally. If there is a glut of goods in the market, the supply is held to be in excess of the demand and the price must fall. There is, we are told, a glut of gold in America. If there be any meaning in the statement, America should be willing to supply that gold and those requiring it should be able to obtain it for the asking. Somewhere or other, however, the theory or its application goes all wrong. America not only holds the gold, but comes into the open market and buys still more, leaving the outside world to carry on with inadequate supplies.

The world is confronted with a serious situation. Economists and reformers have supinely accepted the theory that trusts and the centralisation of financial interests are the natural results of industrial development. In so far as they form a mental image of the process at all, they picture to themselves a number of trusts spread with a

certain evenness of distribution among the industrial countries. Such an image is a distortion of facts. America is, and has always been, far ahead of England in the development of trusts, and although trustification has proceeded, up to the present, largely upon national lines, its future development threatens to ignore all political frontiers. The interests that will acquire the dominant hold over the international trusts of the future are those that control the greatest quantity of financial assets. It follows, therefore, that the supposed glut of gold in America gives her financiers an advantage over all rivals in the coming struggle for world control of industry.

The reader will be justified in asking how the centralisation of gold and of industrial control arose. The question finds its answer in the study of financial history. Certain financial theorists succeeded, in the early days of financial ignorance, in gaining acceptance for the doctrine that, while the free supply of commodities should not be hindered by Governmental interference, the free supply of credit is a vice that must on no account be tolerated. These theorists have been responsible for the creation of an artificial system of banking operating round central banks of issue. Such a system can, by its very nature, only be centripetal, and it is not surprising that its centralising tendencies should show themselves more and more as the system proceeds. Stuckey, a very shrewd West Country banker, predicted that, if a single bank were given sole power of note issue in England, gold would leave the provinces and come to London. Had he been in a position to foresee that the world would adopt the same theory, he might have added that the gold would not stop at London, but would tend to go to the centre of the centripetal system. His prophecy would have been truer to fact than the picturesque dissertations of the accepted financial experts of to-day.

The Mannequins' Tea-Party

By Austin Harrison

SHORTLY before Christmas I met an old lady friend, who took me to tea in one of the big shops. The restaurant was magnificent, and while I was munching a muffin a naked arm swung across and by me. Of course, music was being played—I concluded the happy public was dancing, and did not stir. Then I observed my friend. She was staring as if obsessed. Presently she cried: "How beastly!" At this I turned round. From all sides girls in elaborate ball-frocks were parading past the tea-drinkers, in red, in white, in green, in spangled yellow, some very bare, some crinolined, others just contriving to keep up the shoulder strap by undulating movements of arm and hip, gliding without a smile, without a word, without apparently any meaning, round the great room, while the tea-drinkers stared and the waitresses glared, and a spruce young man, like a sergeant, directed operations. A mannequin parade! As my friend put it: "This is Coalition England." While suburbia teas, girls in fifty-guinea frocks, which probably not a single woman in that tea-room could afford, glided like spectres of *Alice in Wonderland* up and down. Outside, 1,500,000 unemployed. A deadweight debt of £7,000,000,000. An increasingly unfavourable trade balance. All Europe sinking. Reparations not even discussed. "And here am I," quaintly ejaculated my dowager friend, "forced to pay super-tax!" I asked her if she had ever read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, but she hadn't, and perhaps it is as well. That evening I saw another picture.

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An Italian picture, in a top room of a restaurant. Drawn up in military formation stood the Fascisti in their black shirts, and I stared at them as a few hours previously I had stared at the mannequins undulating through the hot, stuffy tea-room of one of our big shops. Suddenly there was silence; then, as a man stepped smartly into

the room, the arms of the Fascisti shot out with the old Roman gesture of greeting, and with one voice they shouted "A noi," which means literally "To us," and can best be translated as "We are ready," or "Over the top," "For it," or what one will. The man was Mussolini. He shook hands and spoke to every man in turn, as an emperor might after a great victory. He made a brief speech without any gesticulations. A Vermouth conversation followed, then the flag was saluted, once more the greeting of the Fascisti rang out, "A noi"—Mussolini was gone. I again thought of Gibbon. This was a living picture of at least a reality. There was a meaning in the disciplined enthusiasm of those black-shirted men, some of them counts, some waiters, some sailors, some professors: a spiritual force. This was not decay. Here was no mannequin parade. Subsequently we dined together somewhere in Soho. An absolute democratic spirit reigned. Resplendent youth was alive, conscious of country, of responsibility, of service, and so when Mussolini was addressed as "Excellency" he abruptly stopped the speaker: "Don't call me by that old, stupid title; I'm just President." I have seen the ex-Kaiser drink punch with his guards; Mussolini was quite as certain of himself and equally impressive. I could not help pondering on these two pictures. Will that man, with his Roman jaw, be just another old-world diplomatist? I doubt it. Will he be content to pick up the crumbs thrown to him by the Entente? I wonder. He came to talk reparations. He found two tired, middle-aged cynics fencing over Turkey. He will hardly be the odd horse of the post-war Apocalypse.

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Four years after the Armistice the Allies met under the new British Government to tackle the simple matter of reparations and—again separated in "perfect accord," having, in fact, not even seriously discussed the subject. All Europe is sinking. Banker after banker warned the Government that something must be done. We have 1,500,000 unemployed costing the country £100,000,000 a year. Yet no serious effort was even attempted. The Governments met to meet again in January. Thus is a world in ruins governed to-day. What did happen? Why did this Government—Lord Beaverbrook's Government, as it will

probably be known in history—do nothing? The answer is Lausanne, or the other Conference. There another secret diplomatic battle is being fought between France and England, and as we cannot obtain our victory over oil and the Straits without France, so London was merely the buffeting-basis for Lausanne; it was, diplomatically, not thought advisable to come to grips until we had secured our aims at Lausanne. M. Poincaré suffered a diplomatic rebuff. Or we did. Tranquillity. Window-dressing for Christmas.

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Mussolini, who had come to promote a settlement, found a French lawyer talking £6,000,000,000 or the London agreement coupled with the Rhine policy of " productive guarantees," which, of course, is the Rhine, and when he proposed £2,000,000,000 Mr. Bonar Law proposed £1,600,000,000. And there they left it. London was referred to Paris, by which time diplomacy hopes some kind of a settlement may be reached with Turkey. If not, Paris will probably share the same fate. In diplomatic drawing-rooms they say—of course, the 300,000,000 peoples of Europe are not permitted to know a word of what the two masters of their destinies choose to prescribe for them—that Mr. Bonar Law has struck an agreement with France that if France backs us over Turkey we will show a blind eye to her annexationist Rhenish policy; we must wait and see. It seems incredible, and his own remarkably simple, cautious statement in the Commons hardly looks like a deal, for indeed it was endorsed by a single front and has somewhat cleared the air. But there is no knowing. French policy is now admitted at Westminster to follow the lines disclosed in the " secret report " of M. Dariac; it is the Rhine. Big business has become alarmed at the conditions of trade. It thinks only commercially. It reasons that the loss of the European market may be supplemented elsewhere, and there is strong newspaper pressure which favours " Let France go in," on which policy Mr. Lloyd George was unquestionably dismissed by the baronial newspaper proprietors who govern England in the absence of an informed and principled opinion, *viâ* advertisements, which are the shop-window of trade and of finance.

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And so the dreary farce drags on. The question before England, if there is a Tory secret pact with France and France embarks upon her policy of annexation, will be nothing less than the next war. Such a pact would inevitably fail (1) because it is economically unsound, (2) because America will not support it, (3) because Italy under Mussolini may reject it, (4) because Germany will recover the national spirit under its humiliation, (5) because all that is true and splendid in the English character will oppose it. The key is America. Will America strike a policy? Will she return to Europe? There are signs that she is developing an attitude, and just as Mr. Child saved us at Lausanne so probably America will launch a little dollar bomb addressed to France, which may really induce politicians to face the facts and place reparations and debts upon a sensible basis. The only difficulty now is France. How, that is, are we, without breaking the Entente, to prevent France from carrying out her aim of breaking up Germany? Secondly, how much money can we get out of Germany in order to convince France that economics are not in modern conditions compatible with Buonapartism?

* * * *

Could men and nations be ruled scientifically, the European credit problem would present no difficulties. Lord Rothermere could with his £40,000,000 subscription, on gold, buy in the entire German national war debt of £10,000,000,000, and re-start Germany to-morrow. In a week America, if she used her gold instead of hoarding it, could with £400,000,000 (gold) buy in practically all the depreciated currencies of Europe, burn the paper, and start out all Europe, minus debts, on a prosperous life of plenty. If Messrs. Gordon Selfridge took Austria, Lord Rothermere Germany, Lord Beaverbrook Greece and Turkey, Lord Leverhulme the Balkans, and, say, the Coats family Russia, these gentlemen could wipe out all the paper moneys and take their profits on " futures," so simple is the affair technically. If I were a millionaire I would certainly take over one of these countries, if only for the sheer fun of the thing; indeed, it is surprising that this amusing solution has not occurred to men who profess to be " fed up " with the absurd incompetence of the Governments they deign to tolerate. This is not fiction, it is fact. The

gold countries present a different problem. Here the issue is devaluation. Keynes, Cassel, and the Americans command devaluation, but France, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia sternly refuse. Again, were peoples ruled by scientific economics there would be no difficulty; the solution of Europe would proceed on these lines.

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A posse of British millionaires buy in Europe's mad currencies (for example, £10,000,000 would buy in Germany's 400,000,000,000 marks at 40,000 to the £), thus eliminating all national debts, while the gold peoples devaluate, thus France, say, at 75, Italy at 100, Czecho-Slovakia at 140, etc. In this way France could divide her debt by three, Italy by four, etc.; only Britain, hauled up the slippery slope of par by an America who needs British purchasing power and *must have a gold partner if the gold standard is to be saved*, sticking to gold, or real debts, real interest, real redemption funds, and real taxes, struggles along in the orbit of American finance, " whirled into happiness " in the Milky Way of the Federation of American bankers. But, alas! we have not yet reached the sociological or scientific State. Our millionaires do not favour the adventurous life, and the gold peoples do not like the implication of humiliation involved, as they quite erroneously imagine, by devaluation. The very word offends them, and it is because France refuses, that reparations can still form the subject of serio-comic discussion. All this is astonishing enough; it soars into the gaseous zones of argon when we realise, as more and more people are slowly beginning to realise, that the real Bolshevists to-day are the victorious Governments of France and Britain, for four years now actively engaged in bringing Europe to ruin by destroying the world's credit system. In *The Manchester Guardian Special Supplement* (December) there was one illuminating rocket in the form of a letter from M. Caillaux, who is a little bit more than a financier and somewhat more imaginative than the (gold) financial theorist. He repudiates devaluation. He describes discussions on stabilisation as " petty." He asks whether gold is to continue to be the world's monetary basis. He looks to a new basis of wealth, a movable basis ahead of the increase of production. What does this

mean? It means that we are moving towards a new standard and mechanism of wealth and its control. It may mean that the gold standard policy will not succeed. In fact, Caillaux and Stinnes integrate, are forcing the hands of the professors.

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But this is imaginative economics; to return to the unrealities which most men like—what are we going to do? According to plan, our " tranquil " Government are to have another parley in January, and on the 15th France will claim her right to secure guarantees in the shape of the first move towards severing the Rhine-land from Germany after the model of Napoleon. Only one thing is certain: it is that America will not meekly acquiesce in this violation of rights, and, this being so, it is a moot question whether the shortest way out of Europe's difficulty would not be to allow France to " go in " with her actuaries and black conscripts, thereby forfeiting the respect of the world. France would get no money in this way; also it is certain that the immediate effects of so flagrant an abuse of power, violating the terms of the Treaty of peace, would restore the Germanic national sense and automatically divide Europe into an anti- and pro-French camp. What about the franc? Probably the franc would then depreciate. As America hauled us up to parity, she would depress the French franc. Would the French care, provided they obtained their end, which is the control of German industries and the break-up of the Bismarckian Empire? M. Caillaux's hint is perhaps symptomatic. France is economically sound enough, and she is now our great " heavy " rival. She, too, may try an experiment in political economy; in fact, she is trying to make the franc the paper standard of Europe. Theorists who think that the world must always be controlled by a mechanism which has been proved fallacious should carefully weigh this problem, because there is nothing to prevent the adoption of a European paper * currency based, not on gold, but on natural resources, or credit potentiality, or silver or any mineral, or, better still, on some value which is not in itself speculative. When France is convinced at last that reparations was simply a

* Similarly, America might put the £ at 7 dollars, thereby enabling her to flood us with exchange-dumps.

gigantic spoof foisted by politicians drunk with vanity and greed upon an ignorant public, and similarly that any idea of a loan to-day, or of selling us the pup in the shape of German C bonds, is only political nonsense, she will unquestionably have to make her choice: either the Rhine and to blazes with the franc, or no Rhine and a good franc; Europe's fate depends upon whether France thinks the gold standard matters more than the Rhine.

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As for Germany, she resembles a Rolls-Royce car which soon will have broken down on the roadside. It looks a big, capable, well-appointed car, and yokels and passers-by wonder why so efficient a machine cannot move. Anon another car arrives, and its occupants, who seem authoritative people, and in fact are the world's finance doctors or professors on their way to attend a Conference, step out and examine the derelict. Unanimously, they express the opinion that the petrol is deficient—too thin, too watery, too Turkish—and that, given a healthy American (Standard) supply of the oil, the machine can be restarted. This is the English Bankers' official point of view up to date, *i.e.*, stabilisation. Now THE ENGLISH REVIEW entirely challenges this doctrinal view. It suggests to these practitioners that if they raise the bonnet of the Rolls-Royce, which in the case of such a car no good chauffeur does, they will discover that all the cylinders are badly cracked at the base—all first-class securities in Germany having been rendered virtually valueless; and that to restart the car new cylinders must consequently be provided, *i.e.*, the value of all prior securities in Germany must be restored by special legislation, failing which no devaluation, stabilisation, or other monetary contraption can help or mend the broken German credit system. Take another simile, the great Adlon Hotel in Berlin. Its debentures are valueless, yet the hotel is there, crowded with profiteering foreigners, the lifts work, the water is hot, the bells ring, and the hall-porter is radiant. The debenture-holders are ruined—the hall-porter is prosperous. What does this mean? It is an object-lesson in political economy, implying financial nonsense. It means that real wealth is not wealth, or that real wealth is controlled by the mechanism of exchange, which, being speculative, is an

absurdity. Yet it is so. And because of it we all got muddled over reparations, and to-day we find ourselves—in the soup.

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Mr. Bonar Law—we really owe him thanks for his honesty—recently said a significant thing which touches the quick of the problem. Having blown away the lie that Germany had deliberately inflated herself into perdition, he said that failing a distinct trade revival " we shall reach a position which will be worse almost than that of any of the Allied countries." That is the truth about England, especially on the gold standard. Now the German position is this world-joke or paradox. If we at last fix a capacity reparations figure, say £1,500,000,000, she could, with dollar help, cash in and stabilise to emerge free of debt, whereas we, tied to gold, have a £7,000,000,000 dead-weight debt, plus that American £800,000,000; which means terrible taxes or levies here while Germany only has to find the money for reparations. Both sides are caught on our Versailles Treaty folly. If the German Rolls-Royce completely breaks down, the purchasing-power of Europe will collapse and Lenin will order a cask of champagne. If now we are sensible about reparations, (1) France can only get a little money, say £1,000,000,000, enough to fill up her yearly deficit; (2) Germany issues with her real wealth intact; (3) we will have to face a very Calvary of arduous recovery. It can be stated in this way. We have saved the mechanism, Germany has saved her wealth. The problem of Germany is how to restore the mechanism, of England how to restore her wealth or trade. To prolong the agony means common ruin. To restore Germany—of course the only way to get real money out of her—would be to handicap us, crippled with real debts and taxes indefinitely. There is no escape from this entanglement, and so we find British bankers now beseeching Germany to help our trade, while France does all she can to ruin us both. Every day the danger-point draws nearer, and each day more so as the rising pound makes it more impossible for Europe to buy from us.

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The only question is, how to stop the rot—reparations, debts, are mere politics. The whole money question is one,

and the real issue is the gold standard or a scientific standard. The German problem is how to restore the value of prior securities, for if a stable currency is necessary to a capitalist system it is useless to discuss stabilisation in the absence of a capitalist system to which to apply it. Yet this basic truth is never discussed, not even by professional economists. It is the German capitalist system that is at stake—currency and its stabilisation are merely the lubricating oil of the engine. The world's difficulty is not the mechanism of salvage, but how to repair the roots of the system, how to stabilise the values of security or confidence by which the system functions, and until we are shown how the debentures of the Adlon Hotel can be restored to their true values, Fritz, the hall-porter, holds the key of Europe in his pocket, and, if he smashes, the fate even of England.

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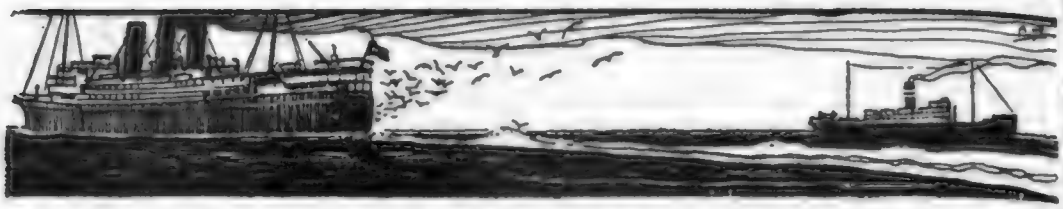
If France hopes to get money out of Germany she must give up her idea of being a coal merchant in the Ruhr, she must take a hand in the restoration of the capitalist system in Germany or face the *débâcle* of her own; at any rate until this work is seriously undertaken projects and theories about stabilisation are almost as futile as the talk about reparations; as Mr. Bonar Law honestly put it, stabilisation would smash German industries, or real wealth. Yet if this is not done the German machine will come to a stop. Then—who can tell? Perhaps the mannequins parading round the tea-room are right in so mad a world. The frocks cost fifty guineas—where are the buyers? Well, we have smashed the European market. We look on—spectators at a gilt-edged tea-party, content for the nonce with a muffin. Yet I cannot help recalling that Gibbon wrote his history at Lausanne, where now we are painting the map for another war, and I cannot help thinking that England will yet rise from her lethargy and servitude, will in turn catch the fire which saved Italy from ruin and which may yet save Europe, and with one voice shout the glad call, " we are ready "—for a world of truer values, truer men, and truer ideals. While the old and decrepit destroy the credit system the mannequins are the only philosophers and their parade is the only reality, for it is now clear that unless America comes in with a firm salvage policy the after-war

fight will be long and hideous. Recent reports of a big American loan are *ballons d'essai*, for no loan can be floated until reparations are definitely fixed at a capacity figure, and, as before stated, the German capitalist system has been fitted with new cylinders. This implies at least partial revision of the Treaty, certainly the abandonment of France's Rhine policy, and in this essential operation, which is the precondition to recovery, we should work fearlessly with America by summoning a new economic Conference to deal with Europe's monetary problem as a whole, undisturbed by the clatter of what Lord Northcliffe called "deluded, emotional majorities." An Anglo-American policy would automatically compel France to pursue reason; it is the only way. The American bankers will again try in January, as they did in May, but unless France gives up her militarist policy there will be no money or stabilisation or better trade, and Europe will drift deeper into the bog, and 1923 may witness the great crash of finance and systems. The trouble about Europe's American debt is that everything America bought in Europe she paid for, whereas everything Europe bought or loaned from America was credit. The account thus cannot be mutually "uncharged." France charged America for rentals, port rates, rail mileage and roads; we charged £18,000,000 for transporting troops. If America cancels the debt she will have paid the only indemnity procurable; that is why, financially, France prefers the Rhine. As I conducted my dowager friend into her car after the tea-party, she said, "You know, if I were a man I think I would shoot those girls," and when I hinted that we were not Greeks and that the girls were not Ministers, she replied, "They are wasting my super-tax money on frocks instead of getting it out of Germany. I wonder you men are not ashamed." "My dear lady," I retorted, "many, many of us are." That at least is of good augury for the new year, and when a sufficient number of men are ashamed of their millions of idle men, of politicians' economics which have made Europe bankrupt, of the shams and futilities which render the intelligence, character, and genius of England impotent, then we shall begin to recover what matters—the spirit and purpose of our civilisation.



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Books.

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

THE OLD COUNTRY. By ERNEST RHYS. J. M. Dent and Sons. 4*s.* 6*d.* net.

THIS capital little book "of the love and praise of England" was, Mr. Rhys tells us, originally designed and produced to delight the men at the front with some of the atmosphere of home. It is a scrap-book gathered together from the writings of those—not all Englishmen—who from the spacious days down to Rupert Brooke have had noble, pleasant, and descriptive things to say of English ideals and the English countryside. Mr. Rhys has added to his original idea and produced a banquet of *hors d'œuvre* very unlike a solid British meal, but for that very reason admirable. The essence of the thing is here, the sweet savour from many splendid feasts to set the mouth watering for more; so for those who like refreshment between meals, as well as for the many who have no time to take solid nourishment, this book of excerpts is excellent; if only as a remembrance of the passion of desire with which millions languished in France and Flanders and elsewhere. It is a book of unusual interest, and the pictures are as apt to the pur-

pose as the rest of the bill of fare—fine confused eating they, too. Herbert Railton's elegant observations of historical buildings and places, stylish bits of the essentially British H. M. Brock, colour plates of a post-cardy sweetness all extraordinarily English, with everything handsome and nothing high-brow about them. A scrap-book, in short, very likeable to all but the superior person, and just the sort of book for a hungry Tommy or that still hungrier youth which lacks the education of duty, discipline, and delight.

SIR DOUGLAS HAIG'S COMMAND. By GEORGE A. B. DEWAR and LIEUT.-COL. J. H. BORASTON, C.B. Constable and Co. Two vols. 42*s*. net.

THIS work was to be expected—in fact, we are astonished that something of the kind has not appeared before in days when people only want to read what they want to believe about the war. Its object is to represent Haig as the great General of the war, Foch taking a back seat. There are elements of truth in the plea. France would have lost the war over and over again but for us, as we all would have lost it in the end but for American finance, materials, and men; also, we gladly admit that Haig has not received adequate recognition. The French were wrong again and again, over Nivelle, in 1918, both as regards the offensive against us and against them, and Foch always toyed with the idea of that German Swiss offensive. But the authors quite overstate their case, thereby spoiling what might have been a very interesting compilation. The brutal truth is this: Haig's attrition battles showed no military genius, and would have proved fatal but for the miracle of the "green" boys from America, who enabled Foch to amass his entire striking force for the counter-stroke against the Germans, and it is rather "cheap" strategy to represent Haig's unimaginative and horribly costly battles as genius. It is nonsense to pretend we did not think of "breaking through." We thought of little else. What we really want to know is the truth about the Haig-Pétain want of support of the Supreme War Council, which left Gough unsupported in March, 1918; the authors, too, belittle this terrible defeat, which almost lost us the war. However, there is a lot in these volumes to interest and flatter, though militarily it cannot be regarded as an historical contribution; the disparagement of Foch is regrettable.

DREAM DAYS. By KENNETH GRAHAME. Lane. 6*s*. net.

OBLOQUY and immortality await the writer who first gives us the real child *au naturel*, instead of the accepted child of civilisation, for in nothing are we so timidly conventional as in the permissible typical child, and the worst of it is that with the genius for snobbery and adulation with which every child is dowered, they themselves play up to their creators and exemplars, and appear to react to all the established tests. See, for example, boy-scoutery and the public school tradition—all protective colouration. Even do not some of them carefully trail clouds of glory, at a quite tender age, to be correct? Doctors are beginning to be taken in by this joint conspiracy of the mature intellect—that magnificent thing—and swift childish apprehension of the direction in which the wind blows; they tell us that little boys who rob orchards do so because they are driven to it by their physiological craving for

vitamines! A delightful contribution to the mature conspiracy for seeing only what is permissible—the general pact in which pastors and masters, parents and guardians, and even people of talent combine for the suppression of genius. The fact of the matter is that childhood has got into the hands of the child fancier, just as dogs and pigeons and other delightful creatures have done in the past. Fortunately the child fancier cannot mutilate or deal in prepotencies, he has to conduct his selective and abortive processes on paper to delight us with Pekinese pouter types, recognisable creations in which the variety in uniformity is the delight of a race of judges. Mr. Grahame does the acceptable thing supremely well. His standpoint is that of the Brobdingnag examining the Lilliputian world with detached sympathy. He is a stylist, and writes with such easy grace that even when his recollections are completely at fault he can produce such cunningly invented substitutions that the mind of the reader is amused and charmed. He also knows, none better, that we love to have it so, and that, whilst immortality is a deferred reward, obloquy is a prompt paymaster. Still, it would be foolish to criticise a classic at this time of day, when this book—one of many kindred delights—can be had in a great variety of editions, great and small, pictured by this and by that accomplished hand, rather a word or two about this particular impression. Miss Lois Lenski provides the illuminations, some in colour, others in line, with a mingling of the mediæval and the futuristic touch which is perfectly of the Bodley Head and Yellow Book tradition. They, of course, do not illustrate—a Victorian vulgarity of which this school would never be guilty—but they make piquant notes of highly sophisticated modernity to a well-got-up six shillingsworth on good paper in clear and comely type. In short, an entirely successful collaboration of pen, pencil, and publisher.

A Portrait of George Moore. By John Freeman. Wernie Laurie. 16*s*. net.

Piquancy is lent to this study of the anti-Catholic George Moore by the fact that his critic is a Catholic, and in the art of Mr. Moore the two seem to fuse into a common brotherhood of letters. Mr. Freeman is a kindly observer and deals very fairly with Mr. Moore's opinions, summing him up justly and sympathetically. It is an interesting book of criticism, and Mr. Freeman is undoubtedly right in giving full praise to the most beautiful writer of English now living.

The Farington Diary. By Joseph Farington, R.A. Vol. I. Hutchinson. 21*s*. net.

Scholarly edited by Mr. James Greig, *The Farington Diary*, parts of which appeared in the *Morning Post*, has already created quite a sensation. It takes us back to Walpole, Burke and Pitt, and the very interesting period covering the French Revolution up to 1802. Now that it has appeared in book form it will no doubt have a big sale, for it has a real historical and social interest.

The Winter's Tale. With 12 Coloured Plates painted by Maxfield Armfield. Dent. 18*s*. net.

If this elaborate volume, beautifully printed and quaintly illustrated, will contribute to the reading of Shakespeare, it will be a distinct gain, and we cordially recommend this presentation of the play.

BOOKS

FICTION.

THE DIARY OF A DRUG FIEND. By ALEISTER CROWLEY. Collins. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THE return of Aleister Crowley—one of our few living poets—has been signalised by a ferocious attack from a "brother" artist on the score of morality—which philosophically is an amusing commentary on the lack of humour in this post-war epoch of "puritanism," which, presumably, the critic in question represents. Crowley has done most silly things in a curiously wayward life—but enough of the sinner. In this account of drugs he shows up the pathological condition produced by drug-taking and gives a pretty hideous picture of the fate of the drug fiend. There is some good writing, as might be expected, and whilst there is nothing in the book to justify a Crowley "crusade," indeed the moral effect of his exposure is to the good, as a warning. As a picture of drug life, it is a mad document.

THE CATHEDRAL. By HUGH WALPOLE. Macmillan. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

THE impending mass of the Cathedral, huge upon its ledge of rock, looms indifferent and cynical as the Sphinx behind the little doings of its priests and servitors, mingles in storm and flaming sunset skies or soars remote in sun and rain—a pagan entity with the tomb of the black bishop at its heart. This picture is given with fine big touches and remains majestical behind all the drama of intrigue which marks yet another change in its slowly changing retinue. Mr. Walpole takes the year of the second Jubilee of Victoria as the beginning of the battle between new and old, and gives us figures so lively drawn that one is tempted to put real names to them. Archdeacon Brandon, the big eupeptic, handsome, immovable, rather stupid figure of inflexible authority, gets the reader's sympathy, in spite of his narrow, hectoring ways, because Mr. Walpole has drawn such a subtle and convincing portrait of the interloping Canon Ronder—quite the best thing he has done, a presentment of masterly power. Brandon's gradual downfall and the ultimate triumph of the bland and apparently blameless Ronder are the substance of the story, in which the life of the precincts and the town's elect is made wittily animated. Cathedral septs everywhere are focussed in this story, but then 1896 is a long way behind us, so nobody's withers are wrung. One figure of not quite convincing and rather needless grotesquerie is the drunken artist Davray, who through his besotted brain sees the immutable splendour of the fabric and the littleness of its priests—a conception which would have had more force if Davray were better indicated. This is the one weak point of a remarkably fine and intensely dramatic story. The revolt of Brandon's wife and son undermines at home an authority for the first time threatened from without and turns his grotesque self-sufficiency to something pathetically grand. The slightly drawn figure of Ronder is always felt as an incalculable danger; few figures in fiction achieve a greater dominance with the same reticent economy of suggestion. The saintly old Bishop, Brandon's daughter Joan and her lover Johnny St. Leath, come as bits of light and sweetness to relieve the tension of worldly ambitions and thwarted passions which Mr. Walpole makes so actual and wittily alive in this fine book.

THE ENCHANTED APRIL. By the Author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden*. Macmillan. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

SAN SALVATORE in April is one of those little Italian heavens, all flowers and blue sea, kindly service and romantic interiors, which make perfect backgrounds to love tales. Delightful, therefore, to enjoy it in the company of four petrified women, two of them fugitives from stale husbands, one a Victorian widow who wishes to recall her great dead friends, and the fourth a pestered butterfly anxious to live for a moment unchecked by the predatory male. One knows what the author of *Elizabeth* can make of this group and their reactions upon one another. Mrs. Fisher, the dreadful old widow with her memories of Carlyle, Tennyson, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and others, a figure of annoying, delightful fun, Lady Caroline Dester, the super-beautiful and much pursued, and the two wives from Hampstead longing timidly to be themselves for a moment, all are given to us with subtle gaiety, but there is something more than reaction to surroundings in Lottie Wilkins. She has a dash of Titania in her repressed personality—a difficult thing to express, a fresh and delightful note which does get itself sounded. Of course the husbands and the owner of the house turn up to round off the story and complete the enchantment, and all ends with perhaps more than believable sweetness, but the tale is told with joyous cleverness from the very beginning and is worthy of its author's admirable skill in the expression of the subtleties of intercourse spiced with wit and graced by craftsmanship.

POETRY.

BARS AND SHADOWS. By RALPH CHAPLIN. George Allen and Unwin. 2*s*. 6*d*. net.

MR. SCOTT NEARING, in his introduction to these prison poems, tells us that when German and Austrian spies are pardoned and released, Ralph Chaplin is held in his twenty years' sentence, not because he opposed the war, but because he is a danger to capitalists. Anyway, he is in prison for his opinions, though these opinions seem to be free to escape in this poetic form. The portrait shows us a man with the eyes of a dreamer set in the face of a fighter. The poems—mostly sonnets—justify this impression, for they are both tender and resolved. Once or twice he condescends to wring the heart in his "Song of Separation" and "To my Little Son"; but in the main the resolve to serve humanity in his own way of patient foresight, endurance, and scorn of cruelty and stupidity gets itself expressed with a bold and measured perfection astonishing in the circumstances. Ralph Chaplin, like Eugene Debs, is a man to remember.

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